A Philosophical Endeavour

In the

DEFENCE

Of the *Being* of

WITCHES

AND

APPARITIONS:

With some things concerning the Famous

GREAT REK'S.

WRITTEN

In a Letter to the much Honoured

ROBERT HUNT, *Esq;*

By. J. Gifforde one of the Puritans

LONDON,

Printed in the Year, 1668.

PREFACE.

THERE *are a ſort of* narrow, *and* confin'd Spirits, *who account all Diſcourſes* needleſs, *that are not for their particular* purpoſes; *and judge all the world to be of the* Size, *and* Genius *of thoſe within the* Circle *of their Knowledge, and Acquaintance: ſo that with a* pert *and* pragmatical Inſolence, *they cenſure all the* braver Deſigns, *and* Notices *that lie beyond their Ken, as* nice *and* impertinent

nent Speculations. *An* ignorant, *and* proud Injuſtice; *as if this ſort were the only perſons, whoſe humour, and deeds ſhould be conſulted. And hence it comes to paſs, that the* greateſt *and* worthieſt *things that are written, or ſaid, do alwayes meet with the moſt general* neglect, *and* ſcorn; *ſince the* little people *for whom they were not intended, are quick to* ſhoot *their* bolt, *and to condemn what they do not* underſtand, *and* becauſe *they* do *not. Whereas on the other ſide, thoſe that are able to* judge,

and

and would incourage, *are commonly* reserv'd *and* modest, *in passing judgments*; *or, if they should endeavour to do right to things that are worthy, they are sure to be out-voiced by the* rout *of* ignorant *contemners. Upon which accounts I have often thought, that he that courts and values* popular *estimation, takes not the right way, if he endeavour at any thing that is* really excellent; *but he must study the* little plausibilities, *and accomodate the humour of the* MANY, *who are* active Ministers *of*

Fame; *being* zealous, *and* loud *in their* applauſes, *as they are* clamorous *and* impetuous *in their* oppoſitions. *As for* theſe, *'tis one of my chief cares to make my ſelf as much unconcern'd at* their cenſures, *as I am at the* cacklings *of a* Flock *of* Geeſe, *or at the* eager *diſpleaſure of thoſe little* ſnarling *Animals, that are* angry *when I paſs by them. And (if that may ſignifie any thing to keep them from troubling themſelves about the following* CONSIDERATIONS) *I deſire they would*

take

take notice from me, that I writ not those things for such as they; and they will do well to throw up the Book upon this Advertisement, *except they will stay to hear, That though* Philosophical *Discourses to justifie the common belief about* Witches, *are nothing at all to* them, *or those of* their measure; *yet they are too* seasonable, *and* necessary *for our Age, in which* Atheism *is begun in* Sadduciſm. *And those that dare not bluntly say, There is* NO GOD, *content themselves,* (*for a*

fair

fair ſtep, *and* Introduction) *to deny there are* SPIRITS, *or* WITCHES. *Which ſort of* Infidels, *though they are not ordinary among the* meer vulgar, *yet are they numerous in a little higher rank of* underſtandings. *And thoſe that know any thing of the world, know, That moſt of the looſer* Gentry, *and the little pretenders to* Philoſophy *and* Wit, *are generally deriders of the* belief *of* Witches, *and* Apparitions. *And were this a ſlight or meer ſpeculative miſtake, I ſhould not trouble my ſelf, or them*

them about it. But I fear this error hath a core *in it that is worse than* Heresie: *And therefore how little soever I care what men believe, or teach in matters of* opinion, *I think I have reason to be concern'd in an affair, that toucheth so near upon the greatest interests of Religion. And really I am astonisht sometimes to think into what a kinde of Age we are fallen, in which some of the* greatest impieties *are accounted but* Buggs, *and* terrible Names, invisible Titles, *Piccadillo's or Chimera's.*

meras. The ſad and greateſt inſtances, are SACRILEDGE, REBELLION, and VVITCHCRAFT. For the two former, there are a ſort of men (that are far from being profeſt enemies to Religion) who, I do not know whether they own *any ſuch vices. VVe finde no mention of them in their moſt particular* Confeſſions, *nor have I obſerved them in thoſe Sermons that have contained the largeſt* Catalogues *of the* Sins *of our Age, and Nation.* 'Twere dangerous to ſpeak

of

of them as ſins, for fear who ſhould be found guilty. *But my buſineſs at preſent is not with* theſe, *but the other*, *VVITCHCRAFT*, *which I am ſure was a* Sin *of elder times*; *and how comes it about that* this Age, *which ſo much out-does them in all* other *kindes of* wickedneſs, *ſhould be wholly* innocent *in this*? *That there* MAY *be VVITCHES and* Apparitions *in our dayes*, *notwithſtanding the* Objections *of the* Modern Sadduce, *I believe I have made appear in the* CONSIDERATIONS

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following; in which I did not primarily intend direct proof, but DEFENCE, as the Title of the first Edition, which is restor'd in this mention'd. But I have now added the evidence of the Divine Oracles, and two Relations of Fact, that are clear and unexceptionable. I have no humour nor delight in telling Stories, and do not publish these, for the gratification of those that have; but I record them as Arguments for the confirmation of a Truth, which hath indeed been attested by multi-

tudes

tudes of the like evidences in all places, and times: But things REMOTE, or long paſt, *are either not* believed, *or* forgotten: *whereas* theſe *being* freſh, *and* near, *and attended with all the circumſtances of* credibility, *it may be expected, they ſhould have the more ſucceſs upon the* obſtinacy *of* Unbelievers.

Some

Some

CONSIDERATIONS

About

Witchcraft:

In a LETTER to

Robert Hunt, Esquire.

SIR,

THE FREQUENT and *late* dealings you have had in the *Examination* of *Witches*, and the regards of one that hath a very particular honour for you, have brought you the trouble of some CONSIDERATIONS on the Subject. And though what I have to say, be but the *careless* and *hasty* product of a sitting or

two; yet I hope it may afford you ſome, not unreaſonable, accounts of the odde *phænomena* of *Witchcraft* and *Faſcination*, and contribute to the DEFENCE of the *Truth*, and *certainty* of matters, which you *know* by *Experiments* that could not *deceive*; in ſpite of the *little exceptions* of thoſe that are reſolved to believe nothing in affairs of this nature.

AND if any thing were to be much *admired* in an *Age* of *Wonders*, not only of *Nature* (which is a *conſtant Prodigy*) but of *Men* and *Manners*; it would be to me matter of *Aſtoniſhment*, that *Men*, otherwiſe *witty* and *ingenious*, are fallen into the conceit that there's *no ſuch thing* as a *Witch* or *Apparition*, but that theſe are the *creatures* of *Melancholly* and *Superſtition*, foſter'd by *ignorance* and *deſign*; which, comparing the *confidence* of their *disbelief* with the *evidence* of the *things denied*, and the *weakneſs* of their *grounds*, would almoſt ſuggeſt, that themſelves are an *argument* of what they *deny*; and that ſo confident an Opinion could not be held upon ſuch inducements, but by ſome kind of *Witchcraft* and *Faſcination* in the *Fancy*. And perhaps that *evil Spirit*, whoſe

in-

influences they will not allow in Actions aſcribed to ſuch Cauſes, hath a greater hand and intereſt in their *Propoſition* than they are aware of. For that *ſubtil* enemy of Mankinde (ſince *Providence* will not permit him to miſchief us without our own *concurrence*) attempts that by *ſtratagem* and *artifice*, which he could never effect by *open* wayes of acting; and the ſucceſs of all *wiles* depending upon their *ſecrecy* and *concealment*, his *influence* is never more *dangerous* than when his *agency* is leaſt *ſuſpected*. In order therefore to the carrying on the *dark* and *hidden deſigns* he manageth againſt our Happineſs, and our Souls, he cannot expect to advantage himſelf more, than by inſinuating a belief, *That there is no ſuch thing as himſelf*, but that *fear* and *fancy* make *Devils* now, as they did *Gods* of old. Nor can he ever draw the aſſent of men to ſo *dangerous* an aſſertion, while the *ſtanding ſenſible* evidences of his *exiſtence* in his practices by and upon his *inſtruments* are not diſcredited and removed.

'TIS doubtleſs therefore the intereſt of this *Agent* of *darkneſs* to have the world believe, that the *notion* they have of him

is but a *phantome* and conceit; and in order thereunto, That the ſtories of *Witches*, *Apparitions*, and indeed every thing that brings tidings of another world, are but *melancholick Dreams*, and *pious Romances*. And when men are arriv'd thus far, to think there are no *diabolical contracts* or *apparitions*, their belief that there are ſuch *Spirits*, reſts only upon their *Faith* and *Reverence* to the *Divine Oracles*, which we have little reaſon to apprehend ſo great in ſuch aſſertors, as to command much from their aſſent, eſpecially in ſuch things in which they have *corrupt intereſts* againſt their *evidence*. So that he that thinks there is no *Witch*, believes a *Devil gratis*, or at leaſt upon ſuch inducements which he is like to finde himſelf diſpoſed to deny when he pleaſeth. And when men are arrived to this degree of *diffidence* and *infidelity*, we are beholden to them if they believe either *Angel*, or *Spirit*, *Reſurrection* of the *Body*, or *Immortality* of *Souls*. Theſe things hang together in a *Chain* of *connexion*, at leaſt in theſe mens *Hypotheſis*; and 'tis but an happy chance if he that hath loſt *one link*, holds another. So that the vitals of Religion being ſo much

much intereſſed in this ſubject, it will not be impertinent particularly to diſcourſe it.

AND in order to the proof that there have been, and are *unlawful confederacies* with *evil ſpirits*, by vertue of which the *helliſh accomplices* perform things above their natural powers; I muſt premiſe, that this being *matter* of *Fact*, is only capable of the evidence of *authority* and *ſenſe*: And by both theſe, the being of *Witches* and *diabolical contracts*, is moſt abundantly confirm'd. All *Hiſtories* are full of the exploits of thoſe *Inſtruments* of *darkneſs*, and the *teſtimony* of all *Ages*, not only of the *rude* and *barbarous*, but of the moſt *civiliz'd* and *poliſh'd* world, brings tidings of their ſtrange performances. We have the *atteſtation* of thouſands of eye and ear-witneſſes, and thoſe not of the eaſily deceivable vulgar only, but of wiſe and grave diſcerners, and that when no intereſt could oblige them to agree together in a common *Lye*: I ſay, we have the light of all theſe *circumſtances* to confirm us in the belief of things done by perſons of deſpicable power and knowledge, beyond the reach of *Art* and *ordinary Nature*; ſtanding publick *Records*

have been kept of theſe well atteſted Relations, and *Epocha*'s made of thoſe unwonted events. Laws in many Nations have been enacted againſt thoſe vile practiſes; *thoſe* among the *Jews* and our *own* are *notorious*; ſuch caſes have been often determined near us, by *wiſe* and *reverend Judges*, upon clear and convictive evidence: and thouſands in our own Nation have ſuffered death for their *vile compacts* with *apoſtate ſpirits*. All theſe I might largely prove in their particular inſtances, but that 'tis not needful, ſince thoſe that deny the being of *Witches*, do it not out of ignorance of theſe Heads of Argument, of which probably they have heard a thouſand times; But from an *apprehenſion* that ſuch a *belief is abſurd*, and the things *impoſſible*. And upon theſe preſumptions they contemn all demonſtrations of this nature, and are hardened againſt conviction. And I think, thoſe that can believe all *Hiſtories* are *Romances*, that all the *wiſer* world have agreed together to *juggle* mankinde into a common belief of *ungrounded fables*, that the *ſound ſenſes* of *multitudes* together may deceive them, and *Laws* are built

built upon *Chymera's*; that the *graveſt* and *wiſeſt Judges* have been *Murderers*, and the *ſageſt* perſons *Fools*, or *deſigning Impoſtors*: I ſay, thoſe that can believe this *heap* of abſurdities, are either more *credulous* than thoſe whoſe *credulity* they reprehend, or elſe have ſome *extraordinary evidence* of their perſwaſion, *viz. That 'tis abſurd and impoßible there ſhould be a Witch or Apparition.* And I am confident, were thoſe *little appearances* remov'd, which men have form'd in their fancies againſt the belief of ſuch things; their own *evidence* would make its way to mens *aſſent*, without any more arguments than what they know already to enforce it. There is nothing then neceſſary to be done, in order to the eſtabliſhing the belief I would reconcile to mens minds; but to endeavour the removal of thoſe *prejudices* they have received againſt it, the chief of which I ſhall particularly deal with; and I begin with that *bold Aſſertion*, That

I.

(I.) *THE* NOTION *of a* Spirit *is* impoſſible *and* contradictious, *and conſequently ſo is that of* Witches, *the belief of which is founded on that Doctrine.*

TO WHICH *OBJECTION* I *anſwer*, (1) If the *notion* of a *Spirit* be ſo *abſurd* as is pretended, *that* of a *God*, and a *Soul diſtinct* from *matter*, and *immortal*, is likewiſe an *abſurdity*. And then, that the world was *jumbled* into this *elegant* and *orderly Fabrick* by *chance*; and that our *Souls* are only *parts* of *Matter*, that came together we know not *whence*, nor *how*; and ſhall again ſhortly be *diſſolv'd* into thoſe *looſe Atoms* that *compound* them: That all our *conceptions* are but the *thruſting* of one part of *matter* againſt another; and the *Idea*'s of our mindes meer *blind* and *caſual motions*: Theſe and a thouſand more the groſſeſt *impoßibilities* and *abſurdities* (conſequents of this *Propoſition*, *That the notion of a Spirit is abſurd*)

ſurd) will be *ſad certainties* and *demonſtrations*. And with ſuch Aſſertors I would ceaſe to diſcourſe about *Witches* and *Apparitions*, and addreſs my ſelf to obtain their aſſent to truths infinitely more Sacred.

AND yet (2) though it ſhould be granted them, that a *ſubſtance immaterial* is as much a *contradiction* as they can fancy; yet why ſhould they not believe that the *Air* and all the *Regions* above us may have their *inviſible intellectuall Agents*, of *nature* like unto our *Souls*, be *that* what it will; and ſome of them at leaſt as much *degenerate* as the *vileſt* and moſt *miſchievous* among *Men*. This *Hypotheſis* will be enough to ſecure the *poſſibility* of *Witches* and *Apparitions*: and that all the *upper Stories* of the *Univerſe* are furniſh'd with *Inhabitants*, 'tis infinitely reaſonable to conclude from the *analogy* of *Nature*; Since we ſee there is nothing ſo contemptible and vile in the world we reſide in, but hath its living creatures that dwell upon it; the *Earth*, the *Water*, the *inferiour Air*; the *Bodies* of *Animals*, the *fleſh*, the *skin*, the *entrails*; the *leaves*, the *roots*, the *ſtalks* of *Vegetables*; yea, and all

all kinde of *Minerals* in the *subterraneous Regions*: I say, all these have their *proper Inhabitants*; yea, I suppose this Rule may hold in all distinct kindes of bodies in the world, *That they have their peculiar Animals*. The certainty of which I believe the improvement of *microscopical observations* will discover. From whence I infer, That since this little *spot* is so *thickly peopled* in every *Atome* of it, 'tis weakness to think that all the *vast spaces* above, and *hollows* under ground, are *desert* and *uninhabited*. And if both the *superiour* and *lower Continents* of the *Universe* have their inhabitants also, 'tis exceedingly *improbable*, arguing from the same *analogy*, that they are all of the meer *sensible nature*, but that there are at least some of the *Rational* and *Intellectual* Orders. Which supposed, there is good foundation for the belief of *Witches* and *Apparitions*, though the *notion* of a *Spirit* should prove as *absurd* and *unphilosophical*, as I judge the denyal of it. And so this first Objection comes to nothing. I descend then to the second *Prejudice*, which may be thus formed in behalf of the *Objectors*.

II. *THERE*

II.

(II.) *THERE ARE* Actions *in moſt of thoſe* Relations *aſcribed to* Witches, *which are* ridiculous *and* impoſſible *in the* nature *of* things; *ſuch are* (1) *their* flying *out of* windows, *after they have anointed themſelves, to remote places.* (2) *Their* transformation *into Cats, Hares, and other Creatures.* (3) *Their* feeling *all the* hurts *in their own* bodies, *which they have received in theſe.* (4) *Their* raiſing Tempeſts, *by muttering ſome nonſenſical words, or performing ſome little ridiculous ceremonies. And* (5) *their being* ſuck'd *in a certain private place of their* bodies *by a* Familiar. *Theſe are preſumed to be actions inconſiſtent with the nature of* Spirits, *and above the powers of thoſe poor and miſerable Agents. And therefore the* Objection *ſuppoſeth them performed only by the* fancy; *and that the whole* myſtery *of* Witchcraft *is but an* illuſion *of* craſie imagination.

BUT

BUT to this *Objection* I return, (1) in the general, The more *abſurd* and *unaccountable* theſe actions *ſeem*, the greater *confirmations* are they to me of the *truth* of thoſe *Relations*, and the *reality* of what the *Objectors* would deſtroy. For theſe circumſtances being exceeding *unlikely*, judging by the meaſures of common belief, 'tis the greater probability they are not *fictitious*; For the *contrivers* of *Fictions* uſe to form them as near as they can conformably to the moſt *unſuſpected realities*, endeavouring to make them look as *like truth* as is poſſible in the main *ſuppoſals*, though withal they make them ſtrange in the *circumſtance*. None but a fool or madman would relate with a purpoſe of having it believed, that he ſaw in *Ireland*, *Men* with *hoofs* on their *heads*, and *eyes* in their *breaſts*; or, if any ſhould be ſo ridiculouſly vain, as to be ſerious in ſuch an *incredible Romance*, it cannot be ſuppoſed that all *Travellers* that come into thoſe parts after him ſhould tell the ſame ſtory. There is large *field* in *fiction*; and if all thoſe *Relations* were *arbitrary compoſitions*,

ons, doubtleſs the firſt *Romancers* would have framed them more agreeable to the common doctrine of *Spirits*; at leaſt, after theſe *ſuppoſed abſurdities* had been a thouſand times laugh'd at, people by this time would have learn'd to correct thoſe *obnoxious extravagancies*; and though they have not yet more *veracity* than the Ages of *Ignorance* and *Superſtition*, yet one would expect they ſhould have got more *cunning*. This ſuppos'd *impoſsibility* then of theſe performances, ſeems to me a *probable argument* that they are not wilful and deſigned forgeries. And if they are *Fancies*, 'tis ſomewhat ſtrange that *Imagination* which is the moſt *various thing* in all the *world*, ſhould infinitely repeat the ſame *conceit* in all times and places.

BUT again (2) the *ſtrange Actions* related of *Witches*, and preſumed *impoſsible* are not aſcribed to their own powers; but to the Agency of thoſe *wicked Confederates* they imploy: And to affirm that thoſe *evil ſpirits* cannot do that which we conceit *impoſsible*, is boldly to ſtint the powers of Creatures, whoſe natures and faculties we know not; and to meaſure the *world* of *ſpirits* by the *narrow* rules of our own

own *impotent beings*. We see among our selves the performances of *some* out-go the *conceits* and *possibilities* of *others*; and we know many things may be done by the *Mathematicks*, and *Mechanick Artifice*, which common heads think *impossible* to be effected by the *honest* wayes of *Art* and *Nature*. And doubtless the *subtilties* and *powers* of those *mischievous Fiends* are as much beyond the *reach* and *activities* of the most *knowing Agents* among us, as theirs are beyond the wit and ability of the most *rustick* and *illiterate*; So that the utmost that any mans reason in the world can amount to in this particular, is only this, that he cannot *conceive* how such things can be performed; which only argues the *weakness* and *imperfection* of our *knowledge* and *apprehensions*, not the *impossibility* of those performances; and we can no more from hence form an argument against *them*, than against the most *ordinary effects* in *Nature*. We cannot conceive how the *Fœtus* is *form'd* in the *Womb*, nor as much as how a *Plant* springs from the *Earth* we tread on; we know not how our *Souls move* the *Body*, nor how these *distant* and *extream natures* are *united*: And if we

we are *ignorant* of the moſt *obvious* things about us, and the moſt *conſiderable* within our ſelves, 'tis then no wonder that we know not the *conſtitution* and *powers* of the *Creatures*, to whom we are ſuch ſtrangers. Briefly then, *matters* of *fact* well proved ought not to be *denied*, becauſe we cannot *conceive* how they can be performed. Nor is it a reaſonable method of inference, firſt to *preſume* the thing *impoßible*, and thence to conclude that the *fact* cannot be *proved*. On the contrary, we ſhould judge of the *action* by the *evidence*, and not the *evidence* by the *meaſures* of our *fancies* about the *action*. This is proudly to exalt our own *opinions* above the *cleareſt teſtimonies*, and moſt *ſenſible demonſtrations* of *fact*: and ſo to give the *Lye* to all *Mankind*, rather than diſtruſt the little *conceits* of our *bold imaginations*. But yet further,

(3) I THINK there is nothing in the *inſtances* mention'd, but what may as well be accounted for by the Rules of *Reaſon* and *Philoſophy*, as the ordinary affairs of *Nature*. For in reſolving *natural Phænomena*, we can only aſſign the *probable cauſes*, ſhewing how things *may be*, not preſuming how they *are*. And in the particulars

ticulars under our *Examen*, we may give an account how 'tis *possible*, and not *unlikely*, that such things (though somewhat varying from the common *rode* of *Nature*) may be acted. And if our narrow and contracted mindes can furnish us with apprehensions of the way and manner of such performances, though perhaps not the true ones, 'tis an argument that such things may be effected by creatures, whose powers and knowledge are so vastly exceeding ours. I shall endeavour therefore briefly to suggest some things that may render the *possibility* of these performances *conceivable*, in order to the removal of this *Objection*, that they are *contradictions* and *impossible*.

FOR the *First* then, That the *confederate Spirit* should *transport* the *Witch* through the Air to the place of general *Rendezvous*, there is no difficulty in conceiving it; and if that be true which great Philosophers affirm concerning the real *separability* of the *Soul* from the *Body* without *death*, there is yet *less*; for then 'tis easie to apprehend, that the *Soul*, having left its gross and *sluggish Body* behinde it, and being cloath'd only with its *immediate vehicle*

vehicle of *Air*, or more *ſubtile matter*, may be quickly conducted to any place it would be at, by thoſe *officious Spirits* that attend it. And though I adventure to affirm nothing concerning the *truth* and *certainty* of this *ſuppoſition*, yet I muſt needs ſay, it doth not ſeem to me *unreaſonable*. And our experience of *Apoplexies*, *Epilepſies*, *Extaſies*, and the ſtrange things men report to have ſeen during thoſe *deliquiums*, look *favourably* upon this *conjecture*; which ſeems to me to contradict no *principle* of *Reaſon* or *Philoſophy*; ſince *Death* conſiſts not ſo much in the *actual ſeparation* of *Soul* and *Body*, as in the *indiſpoſition* and *unfitneſs* of the *Body* for *vital union*, as an excellent Philoſopher hath made good. On which *Hypotheſis*, the *Witches anointing* her ſelf before ſhe takes her flight, may perhaps ſerve to keep the Body *tenantable*, and in fit *diſpoſition* to receive the *Spirit* at its return. Theſe things, I ſay, we may conceive, though I affirm nothing about them; and there is nothing in ſuch *conceptions* but what hath been own'd by men of worth and name, and may ſeem *fair* and *accountable* enough to thoſe who judge not

altogether by the meaſures of the *populace*, and *cuſtomary opinion*. And there's a ſaying of a great *Apoſtle* that ſeems to countenance this *Platonick opinion*; what is the meaning elſe of that expreſſion: [*Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell*.] except the *Soul* may be *ſeparated* from the *body* without *death*; which if it be granted *poſſible*, 'tis ſufficient for my purpoſe. And

(2.) The *Transformations* of *Witches* into the *ſhapes* of other *Animals*, upon the ſame *ſuppoſal* is very *conceivable*, ſince then 'tis eaſie enough to imagine, that the *power* of *imagination* may form thoſe *paſſive* and *pliable vehicles* into thoſe *ſhapes*, with more eaſe than the *fancy* of the *Mother* can the ſtubborn *matter* of the *Fœtus* in the womb, as we ſee it frequently doth in the inſtances that occur of *Signatures* and *monſtrous Singularities*; and perhaps ſometimes the *confederate Spirit* puts *tricks* upon the *ſenſes* of the *ſpectators*, and thoſe *ſhapes* are only *illuſions*.

BUT then (3.) when they feel the *hurts* in their *groſs* bodies, that they receive in their *aiery vehicles*, they muſt be ſuppoſed to have been *really* preſent, at leaſt

leaſt in theſe latter; and 'tis no more difficult to apprehend how the hurts of *thoſe* ſhould be tranſlated upon their *other bodies*, then how *diſeaſes* ſhould be *inflicted* by the *imagination*, or how the *fancy* of the *Mother* ſhould wound the *Fœtus*, as ſeveral credible relations do atteſt.

AND (4.) for their *raiſing ſtorms* and *tempeſts*, they do it not, be ſure, by their *own*, but by the *power* of the *Prince* of the *Air*, their *friend* and *allie*; and the *Ceremonies* that are enjoyn'd them, are doubtleſs nothing elſe but *entertainments* for their *imaginations*, and are likely deſign'd to perſwade them that *they do* theſe ſtrange things *themſelves*.

AND (laſtly) for their being *ſuck'd* by the *Familiar*, I ſay (1) we know ſo little of the nature of *Dæmons* and *Spirits*, that 'tis no wonder we cannot certainly divine the reaſon of ſo ſtrange an action. And yet (2) we may conjecture at ſome things that may render it leſs *improbable*. For ſome have thought that the *Genii* (whom both the *Platonical* and *Chriſtian Antiquity* thought *embodied*) are recreated by the *reeks* and *vapours* of *humane blood*, and the *ſpirits* that derive from them. Which

ſuppoſal (if we grant them bodies) is not unlikely, every thing being *refreſh'd* and *nouriſh'd* by its like. And that they are not perfectly *abſtract* from all *body* and *matter*, beſides the reverence we owe to the wiſeſt antiquity, there are ſeveral conſiderable arguments I could alledge to render it exceeding probable. Which things ſuppoſed, the *Devil's ſucking* the *Sorcereſs* is no great wonder, nor difficult to be accounted for. Or perhaps (3) this may be only a *diabolical Sacrament* and *Ceremony* to confirm the *helliſh covenant*. To which I adde, (4) That which to me ſeems moſt *probable*, viz That the *Familiar* doth not only *ſuck* the *Witch*, but in the action infuſeth ſome *poiſonous ferment* into her, which gives her *imagination* and *ſpirits* a *magical tincture*, whereby they become *miſchievouſly influential:* and the word *venefica* intimates ſome ſuch matter. Now that the *imagination* hath a mighty power in *operation*, is ſeen in the juſt now mention'd *Signatures* and *Diſeaſes* that it cauſeth; and that the *fancy* is *modified* by the *qualities* of the *blood* and *ſpirits*, is too evident to need proof: which things ſuppoſed, 'tis plain to conceive that the *evil*

ſpirit

ſpirit having *breath'd* ſome *vile vapour* into the *body* of the *Witch*, it may *taint* her *blood* and *ſpirits* with a *noxious quality*, by which her *infected imagination*, heightned by *melancholly*, and this *worſe cauſe*, may do much hurt upon *bodies* that are impreſſible by ſuch *influences*. And 'tis very likely that this *ferment* diſpoſeth the *imagination* of the *Sorcereſs* to cauſe the mentioned ἀποστασία, or *ſeparation* of the *ſoul* from the *body*, and may perhaps keep the *body* in fit temper for *its re-entry*; as alſo it may facilitate *transformation*, which, it may be, could not be effected by *ordinary* and *unaſſiſted imagination*.

Thus we ſee 'tis not ſo deſperate to form an apprehenſion of the manner of theſe odde performances; and though they are not done the way I have deſcrib'd, yet what I have ſaid may help us to a conceit of the poſſibility, which ſufficeth for my purpoſe. And though the *Hypotheſis* I have gone upon will ſeem as unlikely to ſome, as the things they attempt to explain are to others, yet I muſt deſire their leave to ſuggeſt, that moſt things ſeem *unlikely* (eſpecially to the *conceited* and *opinionative*) at firſt *propoſal*; and many great

truths are *ſtrange* and *improbable*, till *cuſtom* and *acquaintance* have reconciled them to our fancies. And I'le preſume to adde on this occaſion, (though I love not to be *confident* in *affirming*) that there is none of the *Platonical ſuppoſals* I have uſed, but what I could make appear to be *fair* and *reaſonable*, to the capable and unprejudic'd.

III.

BUT (III.) *I come to another* prejudice *againſt the being of* Witches, *which is, That 'tis very improbable that the* Devil *who is a* wiſe *and* mighty ſpirit, *ſhould be at the beck of a poor* Hag, *and have ſo little to do, as to attend the errands of the* impotent luſts *of a* ſilly old woman.

TO WHICH I might anſwer, (1) That 'tis much more *improbable* that all the *world* ſhould be *deceiv'd* in *matters* of *fact*, and circumſtances of the cleareſt evidence

evidence and conviction; than that the *Devil*, who is *wicked*, ſhould be alſo *unwiſe*; and that he that perſwades all his ſubjects and accomplices out of their wits, ſhould himſelf act like his own temptations and perſwaſions. In brief, there is nothing more ſtrange in this objection, than that *wickedneſs* is *baſeneſs* and *ſervility*, and that the *Devil* is at leaſure to ſerve thoſe he is at leaſure to tempt, and induſtrious to ruine. And again, (2) I ſee no *neceſſity* to believe that the *Devil* is alwayes the *Witches confederate*; but perhaps it may fitly be conſidered, whether the *Familiar* be not ſome *departed humane ſpirit*, forſaken of God and goodneſs, and ſwallowed up by the unſatiable deſire of miſchief and revenge, which poſſibly by the *laws* and *capacity* of its *ſtate* it cannot execute *immediately*. And why we ſhould preſume that the *Devil* ſhould have the liberty of wandering up and down the Earth and Air, when he is ſaid to be *held* in the *chains* of *darkneſs*; and yet that the *ſeparated ſouls* of the *wicked*, of whom no ſuch thing is affirm'd in any *Sacred Record*, ſhould be thought ſo *impriſon'd*, that they cannot poſſibly wag from the place of their

confinement, I know no ſhadow of conjecture. This *conceit* I'm confident hath prejudic'd many againſt the belief of *Witches* and *Apparitions*; they not being able to conceive that the *Devil* ſhould be ſo *ludricous* as *appearing ſpirits* are ſometimes reported to be in their *frolicks*; and they preſume, that *ſouls departed* never *reviſit* the *free* and *open Regions*; which confidence I know nothing to juſtifie: For ſince *good* men in their *ſtate* of *ſeparation* are ſaid to be ἰσάγγελοι, why the *wicked* may not be ſuppoſed to be ἰσοδαίμονες in the worſt ſenſe of the word, I know nothing to help me to imagine. And if it be ſuppoſed that the *Imps* of *Witches* are ſometimes wicked *ſpirits* of our *own kinde* and *nature*, and poſſibly the *ſame* that have been *Sorcerers* and *Witches* in this life: This ſuppoſal may give a fairer and more probable account of many of the actions of *Sorcery* and *Witchcraft*, than the other *Hypotheſis*, that they are alwayes *Devils*. And to this conjecture I'le adventure to ſubjoyn another, which alſo hath its *probability*, *viz.* (3) That 'tis not impoſſible but that the *Familiars* of *Witches* are a *vile* kinde of *ſpirits*, of a very *inferiour* conſtitu-

conſtitution and nature, and none of thoſe that were once of the higheſt *Hierarchy*, now degenerated into the ſpirits we call *Devils*. And for my part I muſt confeſs, that I think the common *diviſion* of *ſpirits* much too *general*; conceiving it likely there may be as great a *variety* of *Intellectual* creatures in the *inviſible* world, as there is of *Animals* in the *viſible*: and that all the *ſuperiour*, yea, and *inferiour* Regions, have their ſeveral kindes of *ſpirits* differing in their *natural perfections*, as well as in the *kinds* and *degrees* of their *depravities*; which being ſuppoſed, 'tis very probable that thoſe of the *baſeſt* and *meaneſt* Orders are they, who ſubmit to the mention'd *ſervilities*. And thus the *ſageſs* and *grandeur* of the *Prince* of *darkneſs* need not be brought into queſtion.

IV.

BUT (IV) *the opinion of* Witches *ſeems to ſome, to accuſe* Providence, *and to ſuggeſt that it hath expoſed* Innocents *to the* fury *and* malice *of* revengeful Fiends; *yea,*

and

and ſuppoſeth thoſe *moſt* obnoxious, *for whom we might moſt reaſonably expect a more ſpecial* tutelary *care and protection, moſt of the cruel practices of thoſe preſum'd* Inſtruments *of* Hell, *being upon* Children, *who as they leaſt deſerve to be deſerted by that* Providence *that* ſuperintends *all things, ſo they moſt need its* guardian influence..

TO this ſo ſpecious an *Objection* I have theſe things to anſwer. (1) *Providence* is an *unfathomable* Depth; and if we ſhould not believe the *Phænomena* of our *ſenſes*, before we can reconcile them to our *notions* of *Providence*, we muſt be groſſer *Scepticks* than ever yet was extant. The *miſeries* of the *preſent life*, the *unequal diſtributions* of *good* and *evil*, the *ignorance* and *barbarity* of the greateſt part of mankinde, the *fatal diſadvantages* we are all under, and the *hazard* we run of being eternally miſerable and undone; theſe, I ſay, are things that can hardly be made *conſiſtent* with that *Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs* that we are ſure hath *made*, and *mingled* it ſelf with all things.

And

And yet we believe there is a *beauty* and *harmony*, and *goodneſs* in that *Providence*, though we cannot *unriddle* it in *particular inſtances*; nor, by reaſon of our ignorance and imperfection, clear it from *contradicting appearances*; and conſequently, we ought not to deny the being of *Witches* and *Apparitions*, becauſe they will create us ſome difficulties in our *notions* of *Providence*. But to come more cloſe, (2) Thoſe that believe that *Infants* are *Heirs* of *Hell*, and *Children* of the *Devil* as ſoon as they are *diſcloſed* to the world, cannot certainly offer ſuch an objection; for what is a little *trifling pain* of a moment, to thoſe *eternal tortures*, to which, if they *die as ſoon* as they are *born*, according to the tenour of this Doctrine, they are *everlaſtingly expoſed?* But however the caſe ſtands as to *that*, 'tis certain, (3) That *Providence* hath not ſecur'd them from other *violences* they are obnoxious to, from *cruelty* and *accident*; and yet we accuſe *It* not when a whole Townful of *Innocents* fall a *Victim* to the *rage* and *ferity* of *barbarous executioners* in *wars* and *Maſſacres*. To which I adde (4) That 'tis likely the *miſchief* is not ſo often done by the *evil ſpi-*

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rit immediately, but by the *malignant* influence of the *Sorcereſs*, whoſe *power* of hurting conſiſts in the fore-mention'd *ferment*, which is *infuſed* into her by the *Familiar*. So that I am apt to think there may be a *power* of *real faſcination* in the *Witches eyes* and *imagination*, by which for the moſt part ſhe acts upon *tender* bodies. *Neſcio quis teneros oculus*——For the *peſtilential ſpirits* being darted by a *ſprightful* and *vigorous imagination* from the *eye*, and meeting with *thoſe* that are *weak* and *paſſive* in the bodies which they enter, will not fail to *infect* them with a *noxious quality*, that makes *dangerous* and *ſtrange alterations* in the perſon invaded by this *poyſonous influence*: which way of acting by *ſubtil* and *inviſible inſtruments*, is *ordinary* and *familiar* in all natural *efficiencies*. And 'tis now paſt queſtion, that *nature* for the moſt part acts by *ſubtil ſtreams* and *aporhœa's* of *minute particles*, which paſs from one body to another. Or however that be, this kinde of *agency* is as *conceivable* as any of thoſe *qualities ignorance* hath call'd *ſympathy* and *antipathy*, the *reality* of which we *doubt* not, though the *manner* of *action* be *unknown*. Yea, the thing

thing I ſpeak of is as eaſie to be apprehended, as how *infection* ſhould paſs in certain *tenuious ſtreams* through the *air* from one houſe to another; or, as how the *biting* of a *mad Dog* ſhould fill all the *blood* and *ſpirits* with a *venomous* and *malign ferment*; the application of the *vertue* doing the ſame in our caſe, as *that* of *contact* doth in *this*. Yea, ſome kindes of *faſcination* are perform'd in this groſſer and more ſenſible way, as by *ſtriking*, giving *Apples*, and the like, by which the *contagious quality* may be tranſmitted, as we ſee *diſeaſes* often are by the *touch*. Now in this way of conjecture, a good account may be given why *Witches* are moſt *powerful* upon *Children* and *timorous* perſons, *viz.* becauſe their *ſpirits* and *imaginations* being *weak* and *paſsive*, are not able to reſiſt the *fatal invaſion*; whereas men of *bold* mindes, who have plenty of *ſtrong* and *vigorous ſpirits* are ſecure from the *contagion*, as in *peſtilential Airs clean* bodies are not ſo liable to infection as are other tempers. Thus then we ſee 'tis likely enough, that very often the *Sorcereſs* her ſelf doth the *miſchief*; and we know, *de facto*, that *Providence* doth not alwayes ſecure

secure us from one anothers *injuries*. And yet I must confess, that many times also the evil *spirit* is the *mischievous Agent*; though this confession draw on me another objection, which I next propose.

V.

(V.) *THEN it may be said, that if* wicked spirits *can hurt us by the* direction, *and at the desire of a* Witch, *one would think they should have the same power to do us injury without* instigation *or* compact; *and if this be granted, 'tis a wonder that we are not alwayes annoy'd and infested by them.* To which

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I RETURN, (1) That the *laws*, *liberties*, and *restraints* of the *inhabitants* of the other *world* are to us utterly *unknown*; and this way we can only argue our selves into *confessions* of our *ignorance*, which every man must acknowledge that is not as *immodest*, as *ignorant*. It must be granted by all that own the *being*, *power*, and *malice* of *evil spirits*, that the *security* we

we enjoy is *wonderful*, whether they act by *Witches* or not; and by what *Laws* they are kept from making us a prey, to ſpeak like *Philoſophers*, *we cannot tell:* yea, why they ſhould be permitted to tempt and ruine us in our *Souls*, and reſtrain'd from touching or hurting us in our *Bodies*, is a *myſtery* not eaſily *accountable*. But yet (2) though we acknowledge their power to vex and torment us in our bodies alſo; yet a reaſon may be given why they are leſs frequent in this kind of miſchief, *viz.* becauſe their main deſigns are levell'd againſt the intereſt and happineſs of our Souls, which they can beſt promote, when their actions are moſt *ſly* and *ſecret*; whereas did they ordinarily perſecute men in their bodies, their *agency* and *wicked influence* would be diſcover'd, and make a mighty noiſe in the world, whereby men wonld be awaken'd to a more ſuitable and vigorous oppoſition, by the uſe of ſuch means as would engage *Providence* to reſcue them from their *rage* and *cruelties*, and at laſt defeat them in their great purpoſes of *undoing* us *eternally*. Thus we may conceive that the *ſecurity* we enjoy may well enough *conſiſt* with the *power* and

and *malice* of those *evil spirits*; and upon this account we may suppose that *Laws* of their own may prohibit their *unlicenc'd injuries*, not from any *goodness* there is in their *Constitutions*, but in order to the more *successful* carrying on the *projects* of the *dark Kingdom*; as *Generals* forbid *plunder*, not out of *love* to their Enemies, but in order to their own *success*. And hence (3) we may suppose a *Law* of *permission* to hurt us at the instance of the *Sorceress*, may well stand with the *polity* of *Hell*, since by gratifying the wicked person they encourage her in *malice* and *revenge*, and promote thereby the main ends of their *black confederacy*, which are to propagate *wickedness*, and to ruine us in our *eternal interests*. And yet (4) 'tis clear to those that believe the *History* of the *Gospel*, that *wicked spirits* have vexed the bodies of men, without any *instigation* that we read of; and at this day 'tis very likely that many of the *strange accidents* and *diseases* that befall us, may be the *infliction* of *evil spirits*, prompted to hurt us only by the delight they take in *mischief*. So that we cannot argue the improbability of their hurting *Children* and others by *Witches*,

Witches, from our own *ſecurity* and *freedom* from the *effects* of their *malice*, which perhaps we feel in more inſtances than we are aware of.

VI.

BUT (VI) *another* prejudice *againſt the* belief *of* Witches, *is*, *a preſumption upon the* enormous force *of* melancholy *and* imagination, *which without doubt can do* wonderful *things*, *and beget* ſtrange *perſwaſions*; *and to theſe cauſes ſome aſcribe the preſum'd effects of* Sorcery *and* Witchcraft. To which I reply briefly, and yet I hope ſufficiently,

(1) THAT to reſolve all the *clear* circumſtances of *Fact*, which we finde in well atteſted and confirm'd Relations of this kinde, into the power of *deceivable imagination*, is to make *fancy* the greater *prodigy*, and to ſuppoſe, that it can do *ſtranger feats* than are believed of any other kinde of *faſcination*. And to think that *Pins* and *Nails*, for inſtance, can,

by the *power* of *imagination* be convey'd within the skin; or that *imagination*, ſhould deceive ſo many as have been witneſſes in *objects* of *ſenſe*, in all the circumſtances of *diſcovery*; this, I ſay, is to be infinitely more *credulous* than the aſſertors of *Sorcery* and *Demoniack contracts*. And by the ſame reaſon it may be believ'd, that all the *Battels* and *ſtrange events* of the world, which our ſelves have not ſeen, are but *dreams* and fond *imaginations*, and like thoſe that are fought in the *clouds*, when the *brains* of the *deluded ſpectators* are the only *Theatre* of thoſe *fancied tranſactions*. And (2) to deny evidence of *fact*, becauſe *their imagination may* deceive the *Relators*, when we have no reaſon to think *ſo* but a bare preſumption, that there is no ſuch thing as is related, is quite to deſtroy the credit of all *humane teſtimony*, and to make *all men lyars* in a larger ſenſe than the *Prophet* concluded in his *haſte*. For not only the *melancholick* and the *fanciful*, but the *grave* and the ſober, whoſe judgements we have no reaſon to ſuſpect to be tainted by their *imaginations*, have from their own knowledge and experience made reports of this nature. But

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to this it will possibly be rejoyn'd, the *Reply* will be another *prejudice* against the belief I contend for, *viz.*

VII.

(VII) *THAT 'tis a suspicious circumstance that* Witchcraft *is but a* fancy, *since the persons that are accused are commonly* poor *and* miserable old women, *who are overgrown with* discontent *and* melancholy, *which are very* imaginative; *and the persons said to be* bewitch'd *are for the most part* Children, *or people very weak, who are easily imposed upon, and are apt to receive* strong impressions *from nothing: whereas were there any such thing really, 'tis not likely, but that the more* cunning *and* subtil desperado's, *who might the more successfully carry on the* mischievous designs *of the* dark *Kingdom, should be oftner engaged in these* black confederacies, *and also one would expect effects of the* hellish combination *upon others than the* innocent *and* ignorant.

TO WHICH *objection* it might perhaps be enough to return (as hath been above ſuggeſted) that nothing can be concluded by this and ſuch like arguings, but that the *policy* and *menages* of the *inſtruments* of *darkneſs* are to us altogether *unknown*, and as much in the *dark* as their natures, mankinde being no more acquainted with the *reaſons* and *methods* of action in the other world, than poor *Cottagers* and *Mechanicks* are with the *intriques* of *Government*, and *reaſons* of *State*. Yea peradventure (2) 'tis one of the great *deſigns*, as 'tis certainly the *intereſt*, of thoſe wicked *Agents* and *Machinators*, induſtriouſly to hide from us their *influences* and *wayes* of acting, and to work, as near as is *poſſible*, *incognito*; upon which ſuppoſal 'tis eaſie to conceive a reaſon, why they moſt commonly work by, and upon the weak and the ignorant, who can make no *cunning obſervations*, or tell *credible tales* to *detect* their *artifice*. Beſides (3) 'tis likely a *ſtrong imagination*, that cannot be *weaken'd* or *diſturb'd* by a *buſie* and *ſubtil ratiocination*, is a neceſſary

ceſſary requiſite to thoſe wicked performances; and without doubt an *heightned* and *obſtinate fancy* hath a great influence upon *impreſſible ſpirits*; yea, and as I have conjectur'd before, on the more *paſſive* and *ſuſceptible bodies*. And I am very apt to believe, that there are as *real communications* and *intercourſes* between our *ſpirits*, as there are between *material agents*; which *ſecret influences*, though they are *unknown* in their *nature*, and *wayes of acting*, yet they are ſufficiently *felt* in their *effects*: for *experience* atteſts, that *ſome* by the very *majeſty* and *greatneſs* of their *ſpirits*, diſcover'd by nothing but a certain *noble air* that accompanies them, will *bear down* others *leſs great* and *generous*, and make them *ſneak* before them; and ſome, by I know not what *ſtupifying vertue*, will tie up the *tongue*, and confine the *ſpirits* of thoſe who are otherwiſe *brisk* and *voluble*. Which thing ſuppoſed, the *influences* of a *ſpirit* poſſeſs'd of an *active* and *enormous imagination*, may be *malign* and *fatal* where they cannot be reſiſted, eſpecially when they are accompanied by thoſe *poiſonous reaks* that the *evil ſpirit* breathes into the *Sorcereſs*, which

likely are *ſhot* out, and *applied* by a *fancy* heightned and prepared by *melancholy* and *diſcontent*. And thus we may conceive why the *melancholick* and *envious* are uſed upon ſuch occaſions, and for the ſame reaſon the *ignorant*, ſince *knowledge* checks and controuls *imagination*; and thoſe that abound much in the *imaginative faculties* do not uſually exceed in the *rational*. And perhaps (4) the *Dæmon* himſelf uſeth the *imagination* of the *Witch* ſo *qualified* for his purpoſe, even in thoſe actions of miſchief which are more properly *his*; for it is moſt probable, that *ſpirits* act not upon *bodies immediately*, and by their *naked eſſence*, but by *means proportionate* and ſuitable *inſtruments* that they uſe; upon which account likely 'tis ſo ſtrictly required, that the *Sorcereſs* ſhould *believe*, that ſo her *imagination* might be more at the *devotion* of the *miſchievous Agent*. And for the ſame reaſon alſo *Ceremonies* are uſed in *Inchantments*, *viz.* for the begetting this *diabolical faith*, and heightning the *fancy* to a degree of *ſtrength* and *vigour* ſufficient to make it a fit *inſtrument* for the deſign'd performance. And theſe I think are reaſons of likelihood and probability,

bability, why the *helliſh confederates* are moſtly the *ignorant* and the *melancholick*. To paſs then to another prejudice.

VIII.

(VIII) THE *frequent* impoſtures *that are met with in this kinde, beget in ſome a belief, that all ſuch* relations *are* forgeries *and* tales; *and if we urge the evidence of a* ſtory *for the belief of* Witches *or* Apparitions, *they will produce two as* ſeemingly ſtrong *and* plauſible, *which ſhall conclude in* miſtake *or* deſign; *inferring thence, that all others are of the ſame quality and credit.* But ſuch arguers may pleaſe to conſider,

(1) THAT a *ſingle relation* for an *Affirmative*, ſufficiently confirmed and atteſted, is worth a thouſand *tales* of *forgery* and *impoſture*, from whence cannot be concluded an *univerſal Negative*. So that, though all the *Objectors ſtories* be *true*, and an hundred times as many more ſuch *deceptions*; yet one *relati-*

on, wherein no *fallacy* or *fraud* could be ſuſpected for our *Affirmative*, would ſpoil any *Concluſion* could be erected on them. And

(2) IT ſeems to me a belief ſufficiently *bold* and *precarious*, that *all* theſe *relations* of *forgery* and *miſtake* ſhould be certain, and not *one* among all thoſe which atteſt the *Affirmative reality*, with circumſtances as good as could be expected, or wiſh'd, ſhould be *true*, but all *fabulous* and *vain*. And *they* have no reaſon to object *credulity* to the aſſertors of *Sorcery* and *Witchcraft*, that can ſwallow ſo large a morſel. And I deſire ſuch Objectors to conſider,

(3) WHETHER it be fair to infer, that becauſe there are ſome *Cheats* and *Impoſtures*, that therefore there are no *Realities*. Indeed frequency of *deceit* and *fallacy* will warrant a greater care and caution in *examining*; and *ſcrupuloſity* and *ſhineſs* of *aſſent* to things wherein *fraud* hath been *practiſed*, or may in the leaſt degree be *ſuſpected*. But, to conclude, becauſe that an old woman's *fancy* abuſed her, or ſome *knaviſh* fellows put *tricks* upon the *ignorant* and *timorous*, that therefore

fore whole *Aſſiſes* have been a thouſand times deceived in *judgements* upon *matters* of *fact*, and numbers of ſober perſons have been *forſworn* in things wherein *perjury* could not advantage them; I ſay, ſuch *inferences* are as *void* of *reaſon*, as they are of *charity* and *good manners*.

IX.

BUT (IX) *It may be ſuggeſted further, That it cannot be imagin'd what* deſign *the* Devil *ſhould have in making thoſe* ſolemn compacts, *ſince perſons of ſuch debauch'd and irreclaimable diſpoſitions as thoſe with whom he is ſuppoſed to* confederate, *are pretty ſecurely* his, *antecedently to the bargain, and cannot be more* ſo *by it, ſince they cannot put their* ſouls *out of* poſſibility *of the* Divine Grace, *but by the* Sin *that is* unpardonable; *or if they could ſo diſpoſe and give away themſelves, it will to ſome ſeem very unlikely, that a great and mighty* Spirit *ſhould oblige himſelf to ſuch obſervances, and keep ſuch a-do to ſecure the ſoul of a ſilly body, which 'twere odds but it would be* His, *though* He *put himſelf*

ſelf to no further trouble than that of his ordinary temptations.

TO WHICH *ſuggeſtions* 'twere enough to ſay, that 'tis ſufficient if the *thing* be well *prov'd*, though the *deſign* be not *known*. And to argue *negatively à fine*, is very unconcluſive in ſuch matters. The Laws and affairs of the other world (as hath been intimated) are vaſtly differing from thoſe of our Regions, and therefore 'tis no wonder we cannot judge of their *deſigns*, when we know *nothing* of their *menages*, and ſo *little* of their *natures*. The ignorant *looker-on* can't imagine what the *Limner* means by thoſe ſeemingly *rude lines* and *ſcrawls* which *he* intends for the *rudiments* of a *Picture*; and the *Figures* of *Mathematick Operation* are *non-ſenſe*, and *daſhes* at *a venture* to one un-inſtructed in *Mechanicks*. We are in the dark to *one anothers* purpoſes and intendments; and there are a thouſand intrigues in our little matters, which will not preſently confeſs their deſign even to *ſagacious inquiſitors*. And therefore 'tis folly and incogitancy to argue

gue any thing one way or other from the *deſigns* of a ſort of Beings, with whom we ſo little communicate; and poſſibly we can take no more aim, or gueſs at their *projects* and *deſignments*, than the *gazing Beaſts* can do at ours, when they ſee the *Traps* and *Gins* that are laid for them, but underſtand nothing what they mean. Thus in general.

BUT I attempt ſomething more particularly, in order to which I muſt premiſe that the *Devil* is a name for a *Body Politick*, in which there are very different *Orders* and *Degrees* of *Spirits*, and perhaps in as much *variety* of *place* and *ſtate*, as among our ſelves; ſo that 'tis not one and the ſame perſon that makes all the compacts with thoſe abuſed and ſeduced Souls, but they are *divers*, and *thoſe* 'tis like of the meaneſt and baſeſt quality in the *Kingdom of darkneſs*; which being ſuppoſed, I offer this account of the *probable deſign* of thoſe *wicked Agents*, *viz.* That having none to *rule* or *tyrannize* over within the *Circle* of their own nature and government, they affect a *proud Empire* over us (the deſire of *Dominion* and *Authority* being largely ſpread through the whole

whole *circumference* of *degenerated nature*, especially among those, whose *pride* was their *original transgression*) every one of these then desires to get him Vassals to pay him homage, and to be employed like Slaves in the services of his lusts and appetites; to gratifie which desire, 'tis like enough to be provided and allowed by the *constitution* of their *State* and *Government*, that every *wicked spirit* shall have those Souls as his *property*, and *particular servants* and *attendants*, whom he can *catch* in such *compacts*; as those *wild Beasts* that we can take in *hunting*, are by the allowance of the Law our *own*; and those Slaves that a man hath *purchas'd*, are his peculiar goods, and the vassals of his will. Or rather those deluding Fiends are like the seducing fellows we call *Spirits*, who inveigle Children by their false and flattering promises, and carry them away to the *Plantations* of *America*, to be servilly employed there in the works of *their* profit and advantage. And as those base Agents will humour and flatter the simple unwary Youth, till they are on Ship-board, and without the reach of those that might rescue them from their hands: In like manner

ner the more *miſchievous Tempter* ſtudies to gratifie, pleaſe, and accommodate thoſe he deals with in this kinde, till death hath lanch'd them into the *Deep*, and they are paſt the danger of *Prayers*, *Repentance*, and *Endeavours*; and then *He uſeth* them as pleaſeth *Him*. This account I think is not unreaſonable, and 'twill fully anſwer the Objection. For though the matter be not as I have conjectur'd, yet 'twill ſuggeſt a way how it may be *conceiv'd*, which nulls the pretence, That the *Deſign* is *inconceiveable*.

X.

BUT *then* (X.) *We are ſtill liable to be queſtion'd, how it comes about, that thoſe* proud *and* inſolent Deſigners *practiſe in this kinde upon ſo* few, *when one would expect, that they ſhould be ſtill trading this way, and every where be driving on the project, which the vileneſs of men makes ſo feiſable, and would ſo much ſerve the intereſt of their luſts.*

TO

TO WHICH, among other things that might be ſuggeſted, I return, (1) That we are never liable to be ſo betrayed and abuſed, till by our *vile diſpoſitions* and *tendencies* we have forfeited the *tutelary* care and *overſight* of the better Spirits; which, though generally they are our *guard* and *defence* againſt the malice and violence of *evil Angels*, yet it may well enough be thought that ſometimes they may take their leave of ſuch as are ſwallowed up by *malice*, *envy*, and *deſire* of *revenge*, qualities moſt contrary to their *Life* and *Nature*, and leave them expoſed to the *invaſion* and *ſollicitations* of thoſe *wicked Spirits*, to whom ſuch *hateful Attributes* make them very *ſuitable*. And if there be particular *guardian* Angels, as 'tis not abſurd to fancy, it may then well be ſuppoſed, that no man is obnoxious to thoſe projects and attempts, but only ſuch whoſe *vile* and *miſchievous natures* have driven from them their *protecting Genius*. And againſt this *dereliction* to the power of *evil ſpirits*, 'tis likely enough what ſome affirm, that the *Royal Pſalmiſt* directs

that

that Prayer, *Psal.* LXXI. ix, x. *Cast me not off in the time of old age, forsake me not when my strength faileth.* For—*They that keep my soul* [φυλάσσοντες τὴν ψυχὴν μου, as the *LXX* and the *Vulgar Latin*, *Qui custodiunt animam meam*] *they take counsel together, saying, God hath forsaken him, persecute him and take him, for there is none to deliver him.* But I adde, (2) That 'tis very improbable, that the state wherein they are, will not easily permit *palpable intercourses* between the *bad Genii* and *our nature*, since 'tis like enough that their own Laws and Government do not allow their frequent excursions into this world. Or, it may with as great probability be supposed, that 'tis a very hard and painful thing for them, to force their *thin* and *tenuious* bodies into a *visible consistence*, and such shapes as are necessary for their *designs* in their *correspondencies* with *Witches*. For in this action their bodies must needs be exceedingly *compress'd*, which cannot be well supposed without a painful sense. And this is perhaps a reason why there are so *few Apparitions*, and why *appearing spirits* are commonly in such haste to be gone, *viz.* that they may be deliver'd from the

the *unnatural preſſure* of their *tender vehicles*, which I confeſs holds more, in the *apparitions* of *good* than of *evil Spirits*; moſt Relations of this kinde, deſcribing their diſcoveries of themſelves, as very *tranſient*, (though for thoſe the Holy Scripture records, there may be peculiar reaſon, why they are not *ſo*) whereas the *wicked ones* are not altogether ſo *quick* and *haſty* in their *Viſits*: The reaſon of which probably is, the great *ſubtilty* and *tenuity* of the bodies of the former, which will require far greater degrees of *compreſſion*, and conſequently of *pain*, to make them *viſible*; whereas the latter, are more *fœculent* and *groſs*, and ſo nearer allyed to *palpable conſiſtencies*, and more eaſily reduceable to *appearance* and *viſibility*.

AT this turn, Sir, you may perceive that I have again made uſe of the *Platonick Hypotheſis*, *That Spirits are embodied*, upon which indeed a great part of my Diſcourſe is grounded: And therefore I hold my ſelf obliged to a ſhort account of that ſuppoſal. It ſeems then to me very *probable* from the Nature of *Senſe*, and *Analogy* of *Nature*. For (1.) We perceive in our ſelves, that all *Senſe* is caus'd and excited

cited by *motion* made in *matter*; and when thoſe *motions* which convey *ſenſible impreſſions* to the *Brain*, the *Seat* of *Senſe*, are intercepted, Senſe is loſt: So that, if we ſuppoſe *Spirits* perfectly to be *disjoyn'd* from all *matter*, 'tis not conceivable how they can have the ſenſe of any thing; For how *material Objects* ſhould any way be perceiv'd, or felt without *vital union* with *matter*, 'tis not poſſible to imagine. Nor doth it (2.) ſeem ſuitable to the *Analogy* of *Nature*, which uſeth not to make *precipitious leaps* from one thing to another, but uſually proceeds by *orderly ſteps* and *gradations*: whereas were there no *order* of *Beings* between *us*, who are ſo deeply plunged into the groſſeſt matter, and pure unbodied Spirits, 'twere a mighty *jump* in Nature. Since then the greateſt part of the world conſiſts of the *finer* portions of matter, and our own Souls are *immediately united* unto *theſe*, 'tis infinitely probable to conjecture, that the nearer orders of Spirits are *vitally joyn'd* to ſuch *Bodies*. And ſo *Nature* by *Degrees* aſcending ſtill by the more *refin'd* and *ſubtile* matter, gets at laſt to the pure Νόες or *immaterial minds*, which the *Platoniſts*

made the *higheſt Order* of *created Beings*. But of this I have diſcourſed elſewhere, and have ſaid thus much of it at preſent, becauſe it will enable me to adde another Reaſon of the *unfrequency* of *Apparitions* and *Compacts*, viz.

(3.) BECAUSE 'tis very likely, that *theſe Regions* are very *unſuitable*, and *diſproportion'd* to the *frame* and *temper* of their *Senſes* and *Bodies*; ſo that perhaps, the *Courſer Spirits* can no more bear the *Air* of our World, than *Bats* and *Owls* can the brighteſt beams of Day. Nor can the *Purer* and *Better* any more endure the *noyſom ſteams*, and *poyſonous vapours* of this *Dunghil Earth*, than the *Delicate* can bear a confinement in *naſty Dungeons*, and the foul *ſqualid Caverns* of uncomfortable Darkneſs. So that 'tis no more wonder, that the better Spirits no oftner appear, than that men are not more frequently in the *Dark Hollows* under ground. Nor is't any more ſtrange that *evil Spirits* ſo rarely viſit us, than that *Fiſhes* do not ordinarily fly in the Air, as 'tis ſaid one ſort of them doth; or that we ſee not the Batt daily fluttering in the beams of the Sun. And now by the help of what I have

have ſpoken under this Head, I am provided with ſome things wherewith to diſable another Objection, which I thus propoſe:

XI.

(XI.) IF *THERE be ſuch an intercourſe between* Evil Spirits *and the* Wicked, *how comes it about that there is no correſpondence between* Good Spirits *and the* Vertuous? *ſince without doubt*, theſe *are as deſirous to propagate the Spirit and Deſigns of the upper and better World, as* thoſe *are to promote the Intereſt of the* Kingdom *of* Darkneſs.

WHICH way of arguing is ſtill from our *Ignorance* of the *State* and *Government* of the other World, which *muſt* be *confeſt*, and *may*, without prejudice to the *Propoſition* I defend. But particularly, I ſay, (1) That we have ground enough to believe, that *Good Spirits* do interpoſe in, yea, and *govern* our Affairs. For that there is a *Providence*

dence reaching from Heaven to Earth, is generally acknowledg'd; but that *this* ſuppoſeth all things to be order'd by the *immediate influence*, and *interpoſal* of the *Supreme Deity*, is not very *Philoſophical* to ſuppoſe; ſince if we judge by the *Analogy* of the *Natural World*, all things we ſee are carried on by the *Miniſtry* of *Second Cauſes*, and *intermediate Agents*. And it doth not ſeem ſo *Magnificent* and *Becoming* an apprehenſion of the *Supreme Numen*, to fancy His *immediate Hand* in every *trivial* Management. But 'tis exceeding likely to conjecture, that much of the *Government* of us, and our Affairs, is committed to the *better Spirits*, with a due *ſubordination* and *ſubſerviency* to the Will of the chief *Rector* of the *Univerſe*. And 'tis not abſurd to believe, that there is a *Government* runs from *Higheſt* to *Loweſt*, the *better* and more *perfect* orders of Being, ſtill ruling the *inferiour* and *leſs perfect*. So that ſome one would fancy that perhaps the *Angels* may manage *us*, as we do the *Creatures* that God and Nature have placed under our *Empire* and *Dominion*. But however that is, That *God* rules the lower World by the *Miniſtry*

ſtry of *Angels*, is very conſonant to the *ſacred Oracles*. Thus, *Deut.* XXXII. viii, ix. *When the moſt High divided the Nations their inheritance, when he ſeparated the ſons of Adam, he ſet the bounds of the people*, Κατ' ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων θεῦ, *according to the number of the Angels of God*, as the *Septuagint* renders it; the Authority of which Tranſlation, is abundantly credited and aſſerted, by its being quoted in the New Teſtament, without notice of the *Hebrew* Text, even there where it differs from it, as learned men have obſerv'd. We know alſo, that *Angels* were very *familiar* with the *Patriarchs* of old; and *Jacob's Ladder* is a *Myſtery*, which imports their *miniſtring* in the affairs of the Lower World. Thus *Origen* and others underſtand, that to be ſpoken by the *Preſidential Angels*. Jer. LI. ix *We would have healed BABYLON, but ſhe is not healed, forſake her, and let us go.* Like the Voice heard in the *Temple* before the taking of *Jeruſalem* by *Titus*, Μεταβαίνωμεν ἐντεῦθεν And before *Nebuchadnezzar* was ſent to learn Wiſdom and Religion among the Beaſts, *He* ſees a *Watcher*, according to the 70. an *Angel*, and an *holy*

One come down from heaven, Dan. IV. xiii. who pronounceth the *ſad Decree* againſt *Him*, and calls it the *Decree* of the *Watchers*, who very probably were the *Guardian Genii* of *Himſelf* and his *Kingdom*. And that there are *particular* Angels that have the ſpecial *Rule* and *Government* of particular *Kingdoms*, *Provinces*, *Cities*, yea and of *Perſons*, I know nothing that can make improbable: The inſtance is notorious in *Daniel*, of the *Angels* of *Perſia* and *Græcia*, that hindred the other that was engaged for the concerns of *Judæa*; yea, our Saviour himſelf tells us, that *Children have their Angels*, and the Congregation of Diſciples ſuppoſed that St. *Peter* had *his*. Which things, if they be granted, the good Spirits have not ſo little to do with us, and our matters, as is generally believed. And perhaps it would not be abſurd, if we referr'd many of the *ſtrange thwarts*, and *unexpected events*, the *diſappointments* and *lucky coincidences* that befal us, the *unaccountable fortunes* and *ſucceſſes* that attend ſome *lucky* men, and the *unhappy fates* that dog others that ſeem born to be *miſerable*; the *Fame* and *Favour* that ſtill waits on ſome with-

without any conceivable *motive* to allure it, and the *general neglect* of others more *deserving*, whose *worth* is not *acknowledg'd*, I say, these and such like *odde* things, may with the greatest probability be resolv'd into the *Conduct* and *Menages* of those *invisible supervisors*, that preside over, and govern our affairs.

BUT if they so far concern themselves in our matters, how is it that they appear *not to maintain a* visible *and* confest correspondence *with some of the* better Mortals, *who are most fitted for their Communications and their influence?* To which I have said some *things* already, when I accounted for the *unfrequency* of *Apparitions*; and I *now adde* what I intend for another return to the main Objection, *viz.*

(2.) THAT the *apparition* of *good* Spirits is not *needful* for the Designs of the better world, whatever such may be for the interest of the other. For we have had the *Appearance* and *Cohabitation* of the *Son* of *God*, we have *Moses* and the *Prophets*, and the continued *influence* of the *Spirit*, the *greatest Arguments* to strengthen *Faith*, the most *powerful Motives* to excite our *Love*, and the *Noblest*

bleſt Encouragements to quicken and raiſe our *deſires* and *hopes*, any of which are more than the *apparition* of an *Angel*; which would indeed be a great *gratification* of the *Animal Life*, but 'twould render our *Faith* leſs noble and leſs generous, were it frequently ſo aſſiſted: *Bleſſed are they that believe, and yet have not ſeen.* Beſides which, the *good Angels* have no ſuch *ends* to proſecute, as the gaining any Vaſſals to ſerve them, they being *miniſtring Spirits* for our *good*, and no *ſelf-deſigners* for a *proud* and *inſolent Dominion* over us. And it may be perhaps not impertinently added, That *they* are not alwayes *evil Spirits* that *appear*, as is, I know not well upon what grounds, generally imagined; but that the extraordinary *detections* of *Murders*, *latent Treaſures*, *falſified* and *unfulfill'd Bequeſts*, which are ſometimes made by *Apparitions*, may be the courteous Diſcoveries of the better, and more benign *Genii*. Yea, 'tis not unlikely, that thoſe *Warnings* that the world ſometimes hath of approaching *Judgements* and *Calamities* by *Prodigies*, and ſundry *odde Phœnomena*, are the *kind Informations* of ſome of the Inhabitants of the

the upper world. Thus, was *Jeruſalem* forewarned before its ſacking by *Antiochus*, by thoſe *Aiery Horſemen* that were ſeen through all the City, for almoſt forty dayes together, 2 *Mac.* V. ii, iii. And the other *Prodigious Portents* that fore-ran its Deſtruction by *Titus*: which I mention, becauſe they are *notorious inſtances*. And though, for mine own part, I ſcorn the *ordinary Tales of Prodigies*, which proceed from *ſuperſtitious fears*, and *unacquaintance* with *Nature*, and have been uſed to bad purpoſes by the *Zealous* and the *Ignorant*; Yet I think that the Arguments that are brought by a late very ingenious Author, to conclude againſt ſuch Warnings and Predictions in the whole kinde, are *ſhort* and *inconſequent*, and built upon too narrow *Hypotheſeis*. For if it be ſuppoſed, that there is a ſort of Spirits over us, and about us, who can give a probable gueſs at the more *remarkable futurities*, I know not why it may not be conjectured, that the kindneſs they have for us, and the appetite of fore-telling ſtrange things, and the putting the world upon expectation, which we finde is very grateful to our own Natures; may not incline

cline *them* alſo to give us ſome general notice of thoſe uncommon Events which they foreſee. And I yet perceive no reaſon we have to fancy, that whatever is done in this kinde, muſt needs be either *immediately* from *Heaven*, or from the *Angels*, by *extraordinary commiſſion* and *appointment*. But it ſeems to me not unreaſonable to believe, that *thoſe officious Spirits* that overſee our affairs, perceiving ſome *mighty and ſad alterations* at hand, in which their *Charge* is much concerned, cannot chuſe, by reaſon of their *affection* to us, but give us ſome *ſeaſonable hints* of thoſe *approaching Calamities*; to which alſo their natural deſire to *foretell ſtrange things* to come, may contribute to incline them. And by this *Hypotheſis*, the *faireſt probabilities*, and *ſtrongeſt ratiocinations* againſt *Prodigies*, may be made unſerviceable. But this only by the way. I proceed to the next objection, which may be made to ſpeak thus.

XII.

(XII.) *THE BELIEF of* Witches, *and the wonderful things they are ſaid to perform by the help of the* Confederate Dæmon, *weakens our* Faith, *and expoſeth the World to* Infidelity *in the great matters of our Religion. For if* They *by Diabolical aſſiſtance, can* inflict *and* cure *Diſeaſes, and do things ſo much beyond the* comprehenſion *of our* Philoſophy, *and* activity *of common Nature; What aſſurance can we have, that the* Miracles *that confirm our Goſpel were not the effects of a Compact of like nature, and that* Devils *were not caſt out by* Beelzebub? *If* evil Spirits *can* aſſume *Bodies, and render themſelves* viſible *in* humane likeneſs; *What ſecurity can we have of the* reality *of the* Reſurrection *of* Chriſt? *And if, by their help,* Witches *can enter Chambers* inviſibly *through* Key-holes *and little* unperceived Crannies, and trasform *themſelves at pleaſure; What Arguments of* Divinity *are there in our* Saviour's *ſhewing himſelf in the midſt of his* Diſciples, *when the Doors*

Doors were ſhut, *and his* Transfiguration *in the Mount?* Miracles *are the great inducements of Belief, and how ſhall we diſtinguiſh a* Miracle *from a* Lying Wonder; *a* Teſtimony *from* Heaven, *from a* Trick *of the* Angels *of* Hell; *if they can perform things that aſtoniſh and confound our Reaſons, and are beyond all the* Poſſibilities *of Humane Nature?* This *Objection* is ſpiteful and miſchievous, but I thus endeavour to diſpatch it.

(1.) THE WONDERS done by *Confederacy* with *wicked Spirits*, cannot derive a ſuſpition upon the undoubted *Miracles* that were wrought by the Author and Promulgers of our Religion, as if *they* were performed by *Diabolical Compact*, ſince their *Spirit, Endeavours*, and *Deſigns* were notoriouſly contrary to all the *Tendencies*, *Aims*, and *Intereſts* of the *Kingdom* of *Darkneſs*. For, as to the Life and Temper of the Bleſſed and adorable *JESUS*, we know there was an incomparable *ſweetneſs* in his *Nature*, *Humility* in his *Manners*, *Calmneſs* in his *Temper*, *Compaſſion* in

in his *Miracles*, *Modeſty* in his *Expreſſions*, *Holineſs* in all his *Actions*, *Hatred* of *Vice* and *Baſeneſs*, and *Love* to all the World; all which are *eſſentially contrary* to the Nature and Conſtitution of *Apoſtate Spirits*, who abound in *Pride* and *Rancour*, *Inſolence* and *Rudeneſs*, *Tyranny* and *Baſeneſs*, univerſal *Malice*, and *Hatred* of *Men*. And their *Deſignes* are as oppoſite, as their *Spirit* and their *Genius*. And now, Can the *Sun* borrow its Light from the *bottomleſs Abyſs*? Can *Heat* and *Warmth* flow in upon the World from the Regions of *Snow* and *Ice*? Can *Fire freeze*, and *Water burn*? Can Natures, ſo infinitely contrary, *communicate*, and jump in *projects*, that are *deſtructive* to each others *known Intereſts*? Is there any Balſome in the *Cockatrice's Egge*? or, Can the *Spirit* of *Life* flow from the *Venome* of the *Aſp*? Will the *Prince* of *Darkneſs* ſtrengthen the *Arm* that is *ſtretcht* out to pluck his *Uſurp't Scepter*, and his *Spoils* from him? And will he lend his *Legions*, to aſſiſt the *Armies* of his *Enemy* againſt him? No, theſe are impoſſible Suppoſals; No intelligent Being will induſtriouſly and knowingly contribute to the *Contradiction* of its own

own *Principles*, the *Defeature* of its *Purposes*, and the *Ruine* of its own deareſt *Intereſts*. There is no fear *then*, that our Faith ſhould receive prejudice from the *acknowledgement* of the *Being* of *Witches*, and *power* of *evil Spirits*, ſince 'tis not the *doing wonderful things* that is the only *Evidence* that the *Holy JESUS* was from God, and his *Doctrine true*; but the *conjunction* of other circumſtances, the *holineſs* of his *Life*, the *reaſonableneſs* of his *Religion*, and the *excellency* of his *Deſigns*, added credit to his Works, and ſtrengthned the *great Concluſion*, *That he could be no other than the Son of God, and Saviour of the world.* But beſides, I ſay,

(2.) THAT ſince *infinite Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs* rules the World, it cannot be conceiv'd, that they ſhould give up the greateſt part of men to *unavoidable deception.* And if *evil Angels*, by their *Confederates* are permitted to perform ſuch *aſtoniſhing* things, as ſeem ſo evidently to carry *God's Seal* and *Power* with them, for the confirmation of *Falſhoods*, and gaining credit to *Impoſtors*, without any *counter-evidence* to diſabuſe the World; Mankinde is expoſed to *ſad* and *fatal deluſion.*

And

And to ſay that *Providence* will ſuffer us to be deceived in things of the greateſt concernment, when we uſe the beſt of our care and endeavours to prevent it, is to ſpeak hard things of *God*; and in effect to affirm, That He hath nothing to do in the Government of the World, or doth not concern himſelf in the affairs of poor forlorn Men. And if the *Providence* and *Goodneſs* of God be not a ſecurity unto us againſt ſuch *Deceptions*, we cannot be aſſured, but that we are alwayes abuſed by thoſe *miſchievous Agents*, in the *Objects* of *plain ſenſe*, and in all the matters of our daily Converſes. If *ONE* that pretends he is *immediately* ſent from *God*, to overthrow the ancient *Fabrick* of Eſtabliſhed *Worſhip*, and to erect a *New Religion* in *His* Name; ſhall be *born* of a *Virgin*, and honour'd by a *miraculous Star*; proclaimed by a *Song* of ſeeming *Angels* of *Light*, and *Worſhipped* by the *wiſe Sages* of the World; Revered by thoſe of the greateſt *auſterity*, and *admired* by all for a *miraculous Wiſdom*, beyond his *Education* and his *Years*: If He ſhall *feed Multitudes* with almoſt *nothing*, and *faſt himſelf* beyond all the *poſſibilities* of Nature: If He ſhall be

be *transformed* into the *appearance* of *extraordinary Glory*, and converſe with departed *Prophets* in their *viſible Forms*: If He ſhall Cure all Diſeaſes without *Phyſick* or *Endeavour*, and raiſe the *Dead* to *Life* after they have *ſtunck* in their *Graves*: If He ſhall be honoured by *Voices* from *Heaven*, and attract the univerſal *Wonder* of Princes and People: If he ſhall *allay Tempeſts* with a *Beck*, and caſt out *Devils* with a *Word*: If He ſhall foretell his own Death particularly, with its *Tragical Circumſtances*, and his *Reſurrection* after it: If the *Veil* of the moſt famous *Temple* in the world ſhall be *rent*, and the *Sun darkened* at his *Funeral*: If he ſhall, within the time foretold, break the bonds of Death, and lift up his Head out of the Grave: If *Multitudes* of other *departed Souls* ſhall *ariſe* with *Him*, to attend at the *Solemnity* of his *Reſurrection*: If he ſhall after Death, *viſibly converſe*, and eat, and drink with divers perſons, who could not be deceived in a matter of *clear ſenſe*, and *aſcend* in Glory in the preſence of an aſtoniſht and admiring Multitude: I ſay, if ſuch a One as this ſhould prove a *Diabolical Impoſtor*, and Providence ſhould

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permit him to be ſo credited and acknowledged; What poſſibility were there then for us to be aſſured, that we are not alwayes *deceived?* yea, that our very Faculties were not given us only to delude and abuſe us? And if ſo, the next Concluſion is, *That there is no God that judgeth in the earth*; and the beſt, and moſt likely *Hypotheſis* will be, *That the world is given up to the Government of the Devil.* But if there be a *Providence* that ſuperviſeth us, (as nothing is more certain) doubtleſs, it will never ſuffer poor helpleſs Creatures to be *inevitably deceived*, by the *craft* and *ſubtilty* of their *miſchievous Enemy*, to their undoing; but will without queſtion take ſuch care, that the *works* wrought by *Divine Power* for the Confirmation of *Divine Truth*, ſhall have ſuch *viſible Marks* and *Signatures*, if not in their *Nature*, yet in their *Circumſtances*, *Ends*, and *Deſigns*, as ſhall diſcover *whence they are*, and ſufficiently *diſtinguiſh* them from all *Impoſtures* and *Deluſions*. And though wicked Spirits may perform ſome ſtrange things that may excite wonder for a while, yet *He hath*, and *will* ſo provide, that they ſhall be *baffled* and *diſcredited*;

as we know it was in the caſe of *Moſes* and the *Ægyptian Magicians*.

NOW, beſides what I have directly ſaid to the *Objection*, I have this to adde to the *Objectors*, That I could wiſh they would take care of ſuch *Suggeſtions*; which, if they overthrow not the Opinion they oppoſe, will dangerouſly affront the Religion they would ſeem to acknowledge. For he that ſaith, *That if there are* WITCHES, *there is no way to prove that* Chriſt Jeſus *was not a Magician, and Diabolical Impoſtor*, puts a *deadly* Weapon into the *hands* of the *Infidel*, and is himſelf next door to the *SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST*: of which, in *order* to the *perſwading* greater *tenderneſs* and *caution* in ſuch matters, I *give* this ſhort account.

THE *SIN* againſt the *Holy Ghoſt* is ſaid to be *Unpardonable*; by which *ſad* Attribute, and the Diſcourſe of our *Saviour*, *Mat.* XII. from the xxii. to the xxxiii. *verſe*, we may *underſtand* its Nature: In order to which we conſider, That ſince the *Mercies* of *God*, and the *Merits* of his *Son*, are *infinite*, there is no-

nothing can make a Sin *unpardonable*, but what makes it *incurable*; and there is no Sin but what is curable by a *ſtrong Faith*, and a *vigorous Endeavour: For all things are poſſible to him that believeth.* So that, *that* which makes a Sin *incurable*, muſt be ſomewhat that makes *Faith impoſſible*, and obſtructs all means of Conviction. In order to the finding *which*, we muſt conſider the wayes and methods the Divine Goodneſs hath taken, for the begetting *Faith*, and *cure* of *Infidelity*: which it attempted, firſt, by the Prophets, and holy men of antient times, who, by the *excellency* of their *Doctrine*, the *greatneſs* of their *Miracles*, and the *holineſs* of their *Lives*, endeavoured the conviction and reformation of a ſtubborn and unbelieving World. But though *Few believed their report*, and men would not be prevail'd on by what they *did*, or what they *ſaid*, yet their *Infidelity* was not hitherto *incurable*, becauſe further *means* were provided in the *Miniſtry* of *John* the *Baptiſt*, whoſe Life was more *ſevere*, whoſe Doctrines were more plain, preſſing and particular; and therefore 'twas poſſible that He might have ſucceeded. Yea, and where He failed, and

could not open mens hearts and their eyes, the Effect was ſtill in *poſsibility*, and *it* might be expected from *Him* that came after, to whom the *Prophets* and *John* were but the *Twilight* and the *Dawn*. And though *His miraculous Birth*, the *Song* of *Angels*, the *Journey* of the *Wiſe Men* of the *Eaſt*, and the *correſpondence* of *Propheſies*, with the *Circumſtances* of the *firſt appearance* of the *Wonderful Infant*: I ſay, though theſe had not been taken notice of, yet was there a further proviſion made for the *cure* of *Infidelity*, in his *aſtoniſhing Wiſdom*, and moſt *excellent Doctrines*; For, *He ſpake as never Man did*. And when *Theſe* were deſpiſed and neglected, yet there were other *means* towards *Conviction*, and *Cure* of *Unbelief*, in thoſe mighty *Works* that bore Teſtimony of *Him*, and wore the evident marks of *Divine Power* in their foreheads. But when after all, theſe *clear* and *unqueſtionable Miracles* which were wrought by the *Spirit* of *God*, and had eminently his *Superſcription* on them, ſhall be aſcribed to the *Agency* of *evil Spirits*, and *Diabolical Compact*, as they were by the *malicious* and *ſpightful Phariſees* in the *periods* above-

men-

mentioned; when thoſe *great* and *laſt Teſtimonies* againſt *Infidelity*, ſhall be ſaid to be but the *Tricks* of *Sorcery*, and *Complotment* with *Helliſh Confederates*, *This* is *Blaſphemy* in the higheſt, againſt the *Power* and *Spirit* of *God*, and *ſuch* as *cuts off* all *means* of *Conviction*, and puts the Unbeliever beyond all *poſsibilities* of *Cure*. For *Miracles* are God's *Seal*, and the great and laſt evidence of the truth of any Doctrine. And though, while *theſe* are only diſ-believed as to the *Fact*, there remains a *poſsibility* of *perſwaſion*; yet, when the *Fact* ſhall be acknowledg'd, but the Power *blaſphemed*, and the effects of the adorable *Spirit maliciouſly* imputed to the *Devils*; ſuch a *Blaſphemy*, ſuch an *Infidelity* is *incurable*, and conſequently *unpardonable*. I ſay, in ſumme, the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt ſeems to be a *malicious imputation* of the *Miracles* wrought by the *Spirit* of God in our Saviour to *Satanical Confederacy*, and the power of *Apoſtate Spirits*; Then which, nothing is more *blaſphemous*, and nothing is more like to provoke the *Holy Spirit* that is ſo abuſed to an *Eternal Dereliction* of ſo *Vile* and ſo *Incurable* an Unbeliever.

THIS account, as 'tis clear and reasonable in it self, so it is plainly lodg'd in the mention'd Discourse of our Saviour. And those that speak other things about it, seem to me to talk at random, and perfectly without Book. But to leave them to the fondness of their own conceits, I think it now time to draw up to a Conclusion of the whole.

THEREFORE briefly, Sir, I have endeavoured in these Papers, which my respect and your concernment in the subject have made *yours*, to remove the main prejudices I could think of, against the existence of *Witches* and *Apparitions*: and I'm sure I have suggested much more against what I defend, than ever I heard or saw in any that opposed it; whose Discourses, for the most part, have seemed to me inspired by a *lofty scorn* of *common* belief, and some *trivial Notions* of *Vulgar Philosophy*. And in despising the *Common Faith* about matters of *Fact*, and fondly adhering to *it* in things of *Speculation*, they very grosly and absurdly mistake: For in things of *Fact*, the *People* are as much to be believ'd, as the most *subtile Philosophers* and *Speculators*; since here, *Sense* is the Judge.

But

But in matters of *Notions* and *Theory*, *They* are not at all to be heeded, becauſe *Reaſon* is to be Judge of *theſe*, and *this* they know not how to uſe. And yet thus it is with thoſe *wiſe* Philoſophers, that will deny the *plain* evidence of the *Senſes* of Mankinde, becauſe they cannot reconcile *appearances* with the fond Crotchets of a Philoſophy, which they lighted on in the *High-way* by *chance*, and will adhere to at *adventure*. So that I profeſs, for mine own part, I never yet heard any of the confident Declaimers againſt *Witchcraft* and *Apparitions*, ſpeak any thing that might move a mind, in any degree inſtructed in the generous kinds of *Philoſophy*, and *Nature* of *things*. And for the *Objections* I have recited, they are moſt of them ſuch as roſe out of mine own thoughts, which I obliged to conſider what was poſſible to be ſaid upon this *occaſion*. For though I have examined *Scot's Diſcovery*, fancying that there I ſhould finde the *ſtrong reaſons* of *mens* diſ-belief in this matter; yet I profeſs I met not with the leaſt ſuggeſtion in all that *Farrago*, but what it had been ridiculous for me to have gone about to *anſwer*: For the Author doth little but tell

odde Tales, and *silly Legends*, which he confutes and laughs at, and pretends *this* to be a *Confutation* of the Being of *Witches* and *Apparitions*: In all which, His *Reasonings* are *trifling* and *Childish*; and when He ventures at *Philosophy*, He is little better than *absurd*: So that 'twill be a wonder to me, if any but *Boyes* and *Buffoons* imbibe any *Prejudices* against a Belief so infinitely Confirmed, from the *Loose* and *Impotent Suggestions* of so weak a Discourser.

But however observing two things, in that *Discourse* that would pretend to be more then ordinary *Reasons*, I shall do them the civility to examine them. It is said then,

(1.) That the *Gospel is silent*, as to the *being* of *WITCHES*; and 'tis not likely, if there were *such*, but that our *Saviour* or his *Apostles* had given intimations of their existence. The other is.

(2.) *Miracles are ceased*, and therefore the *prodigious* things ascribed to WITCHCRAFT are supposed *Dreams* and *impostures*.

FOR ANSWER to the FIRST in order, I consider (1.) That though the

History

History of the *New Testament* were granted to be *silent* in the Business of *Witches*, and *Compacts*, yet the *Records* of the *Old* have a frequent mention of them. The *Law*, *Exod.* XXII. xviii. against permitting *them to live* (which I mention'd in the beginning) is *famous*. And we have another remarkable *prohibition* of *them*, *Deut.* XVIII. x, xi. *There shall not be found among you any one, that maketh his son or his daughter pass through the Fire, or that useth Divination, or an Observer of Times, or an Enchanter, or a WITCH, or a Charmer, or a Consulter with Familiar Spirits, or a Wizard, or a Necromancer.* Now this accumulation of Names, (some of which are of the same sense and import) is a plain indication that the *HEBREW WITCH* was one that practised by *compact* with *evil spirits*. And many of the same expressions are put together in the charge against *Manasses*. II *Chron.* XXXIII. *viz.* That he *caused his Children to pass through the Fire, observed Times, used Inchantments*, and WITCHCRAFT, and dealt with *Familiar Spirits*, and with *WIZARDS*. So that though the *original* word which we ren-

render *WITCH* and WITCH-CRAFT should, as our Sadduces urge, signifie only a *CHEAT* and a *POYSONER*; yet those others mention'd, plainly enough speak the *thing*, and I have given an account in the former *Considerations*, how a *WITCH* in the common notion is a *Poysoner*. But why meer *poysoning* should have a distinct *Law* against it, and not be concluded under the general one against *Murder*; why meer *Legerdemain*, and *Cheating* should be so severely animadverted on, as to be reckon'd with *Inchantments*, *converse* with *Devils*, and *Idolatrous practises*: I believe the *denyer* of *WITCHES* will finde it hard to give a reason. To which I may adde some other passages of Scripture that yield sufficient evidence in the case. The Nations are forbid to hearken to the *Diviners*, *Dreamers*, *Inchanters* and *Sorcerers*, Jer. XXVII. ix. The *Chaldeans* are deeply threatned for their *Sorceries*, and *Inchantments*, *Isa.* XLVII. ix. And we read that *Nebuchadnezzar* call'd the *Magicians*, *Astrologers*, *Sorcerers*, and *Chaldeans*, to tell his *Dream*. All which, 'tis like enough, did *cheat* and *delude* by their *predictions*; but

but that *they* did not *confederate*, and *transact* with *evil Spirits*, is an assertion without a reason, contrary to the expres's Letter, and to what was generally believed in those times.

And the *story* of the *WITCH* of *ENDOR*, 1 Sam. *XXVIII.* is a remarkable *demonstration* of the *main* conclusion, which will appear when we have considered, and removed the *fancy*, and *glosses* of our *Author* about it, in his *DISCOVERY*, where to avoid this evidence, he affirms, *This WITCH* to be but a *Cozener*, and the whole *transaction* a *Cheat* and *Imposture*, managed by *her self*, and a *Confederate*. And in order to the perswading *this*, he tells a fine *Tale*, viz. That she departed from *Saul* into her *Closet*, "Where "doubtless, sayes he, she had a *Familiar*, "some *lewd crafty Priest*, and made *Saul* "stand at the *Door* like a *Fool*, to hear the "*Cozening* Answers. He saith, she there "used the ordinary words of *Conjuration*, "and after them, *Samuel appears*, whom "he affirms to be no other than either the "*Witch* her self, or her *Confederate*. By this pretty *knack* and *contrivance* he thinks he hath disabled the *Relation* from signifying

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fying to our purpoſe. But the *DISCOVERER* might have conſider'd, that all this is an *Invention*, and *without Book*. For there is no mention of the *Witches Cloſet*, or her *retiring* into another Room, or her *Confederate*, or her *Form* of *Conjuration*: I ſay nothing of all this, is as much as intimated in the *Hiſtory*; and if we may take this *large liberty* in the *interpretation* of *Scripture*, there is ſcarce a *ſtory* in the *Bible*, but may be made a *Fallacy*, and *Impoſture*, or any thing that we pleaſe. Nor is this fancy of his only *arbitrary*, but indeed contrary to the *circumſtances* of the *Text*. For it ſayes, *Saul perceived it was Samuel*, and *bowed himſelf*, and *this Samuel truly* foretold his approaching *Fate*, viz. that *Iſrael* ſhould be deliver'd with *Him* into the hands of the *Philiſtines*, and that on the morrow *He*, and his *Sons* ſhould be in the *ſtate* of the *Dead*, which doubtleſs is meant by the expreſſion, that [*they ſhould be with Him*] which *contingent* particulars, how could the *Cozener* and her *confederate* foretell, if there were nothing in it *extraordinary* and *preternatural?* It hath indeed been a great diſpute among *Interpreters*, whether the

the *real Samuel* was *raiſed*, or the *Devil* in his likeneſs? Moſt later Writers ſuppoſe it to have been an *evil Spirit*, upon the ſuppoſition that *good* and *happy* ſouls can never return hither from their *cæleſtial* abodes, and they are not certainly at the beck, and call of an impious Hagg. But then thoſe of the other ſide urge, that the *Piety* of the words that were ſpoke, and the *ſeaſonable reproof* given to *deſpairing Saul* are *indications* ſufficient that they come not from Hell; and eſpecially they think the *Propheſie* of *circumſtances* very *accidental* to be an argument, that it was not utter'd by any of the *infernal predictors*. And for the *ſuppoſal* that is the ground of *that interpretation*, 'tis judged exceedingly *precarious*; for *who ſaith* that *happy* departed *ſouls* were never employed in any *miniſtries* here below? And thoſe diſſenters are ready to ask a reaſon, why *they* may not be ſent in meſſages to *Earth*, as well as *thoſe* of the *Angelical* Order? They are nearer *allyed* to our *Nature*, and upon that account more *intimately concern'd* in our affairs; and the example of *returning Lazarus* is evidence of the thing *de facto*. Beſides which, that it

it was the *real Samuel* they think made probable by the opinion of *Jesus Syrac*, Eccles. XLVI. xix, xx. who saith of him, That *after his death he propheſied and ſhewed the King his end*: which alſo is *likely* from the circumſtance of the womans *aſtoniſhment*, and *crying* out when ſhe ſaw him, intimating her *ſurprize*, in that the power of God had over-ruled her *inchantments*, and ſent another than ſhe expected. And they conceive there is no more incongruity in ſuppoſing God ſhould ſend *Samuel* to rebuke *Saul* for this his laſt folly, and to predict his inſtant ruine, than in his interpoſing *Elias* to the meſſengers of *Ahazias* when he ſent to *Beelzebub*. Now if it were the *real Samuel*, as the Letter expreſſeth, (and the obvious ſenſe is to be followed when there is no cogent reaſon to decline it) he was not *raiſed* by the *power* of the *Witches Inchantments*, but came on that occaſion in a *Divine Errand*. But yet attempts and endeavours to raiſe her *Familiar Spirit* (though at that time over-ruled) are arguments that it had been her cuſtom to do *ſo*. Or if it were as the other ſide concludes, the *Devil* in the *ſhape* of *Samuel*, her *Diabolical Confederacy* is yet more *palpable*. By

By all this it is evident, that there were *WITCHES* in ancient times under the *Diſpenſation* of the *Law*, and that there were ſuch in the *Times* of the *Goſpel* alſo, will not be much more difficult to make good. I had a late occaſion to ſay ſomething about this, in a Letter to a perſon of the higheſt honour, from which I ſhall now borrow ſome things to my preſent purpoſe.

I ſay then (2.) That there were *compacts* with *evil Spirits* in *thoſe times* alſo, is methinks intimated ſtrongly in that saying of the *Jews* concerning our *Saviour*, *That he caſt out Devils by Beelzebub*; in his return to which, he denies not the *ſuppoſition* or *poſſibility* of the *thing* in general, but clears himſelf by an appeal to the actions of their own children, whom they would not task ſo ſeverely. And I cannot very well underſtand why thoſe times ſhould be privileg'd from WITCHCRAFT, and *Diabolical compacts*, more than they were from *Poſſeſſions*, which we know were then more *frequent* (for ought appears to the contrary) than ever they were *before* or *ſince*. But beſides this, There are intimations plain enough in the

Apo-

Apostles Writings of the being of *Sorcery* and WITCHCRAFT. St. *Paul* reckons *Witchcraft* next *Idolatry*, in his *Catalogue* of the *works* of the *flesh*, Gal. V. xx. and the *Sorcerers* are again joyn'd with *Idolaters* in that *sad Denunciation*, Rev. XXI. viii. and a little after, *Rev.* XXII. xv. They are reckon'd again among *Idolaters*, *Murderers*, and *those* others that are *without*. And methinks the story of *Simon Magus*, and his *Diabolical Oppositions* of the *Gospel* in its *beginnings*, should afford clear conviction. To all which, I adde this more general consideration.

(3.) That though the *New Testament* had mention'd nothing of this matter, yet its *silence* in such cases, is not *argumentative*. Our Saviour *spake* as he had occasion, and the thousandth part of what he *did*, and *said*, is not *recorded*, as one of his Historians intimates. He said nothing of those large unknown *Tracts* of *America*, nor gave he any intimations of as much as the *Existence* of that *numerous* people; much less did he leave *instructions* about their *conversion*. He gives no account of the *affairs* and *state* of the *other world*, but only that *general one* of the *happiness* of some, and

and the *misery* of others. He made no discovery of the *magnalia* of *Art*, or *Nature*; no, not of those, whereby the *propagation* of the *Gospel* might have been much *advanced*, *viz.* the *Mystery* of *Printing*, and the *Magnet*; and yet no one useth his *silence* in these instances as an argument against the being of things, which are *evident objects* of *sense*. I confess, the omission of some of these *particulars* is pretty strange, and unaccountable, and concludes our *ignorance* of the *reasons*, and *menages* of *Providence*; but I suppose, *nothing else*.

Thus Sir, to the FIRST. But the other pretence also must be examined.

(2) [*Miracles are ceast, therefore the presumed actions of Witchcraft are tales, and illusions.*] To make a due return to *this*, we must consider a great and difficult *Problem*, which is, *what is a real Miracle?* And for answer to this weighty Question, I think,

(1.) That it is not the *strangeness*, or *unaccountableness* of the *thing done* simply, from whence we are to conclude a *Miracle*. For then, we are so to account of all the *Magnalia* of *Nature*, and all the *mysteries*

of thoſe *honeſt* Arts, which we do not underſtand. Nor, (2) is this the *Criterion* of a *Miracle* that 'tis concluded beyond all *natural powers*; for we are ignorant of the *extent*, and *bounds* of *Natures ſphere*, and *poßibilities*: And if this were the *character*, and *eſſential mark* of a *Miracle*, we could not know what was *ſo*; except we could determine the *extent* of *natural cauſalities*, and fix their *bounds*, and be able to ſay to *Nature*, *Hitherto canſt Thou go, and no further.* And he that makes this his meaſure whereby to judge a *Miracle*, is himſelf the *greateſt Miracle* of *knowledge*, or *immodeſty*. Beſides, though an effect may tranſcend *really* all the *powers* of *meer nature*, yet there is a *world* of *ſpirits* that muſt be taken into our account. And as to them alſo, I ſay, (3) Every thing is not a *Miracle* that is done by *Agents ſupernatural.* There is no doubt but that *Evil ſpirits* can make *wonderful combinations* of *natural cauſes*, and perhaps perform many things *immediately* which are *prodigious*, and beyond the *longeſt line* of *Nature.* But yet *Theſe* are not therefore to be called *Miracles*; for, *They are SACRED WONDERS, and ſuppoſe the POWER to be DIVINE.*

But

But how ſhall the *power* be *known* to be *ſo*, when we ſo little underſtand the *capacities*, and *extent* of the abilities of *lower Agents*? The Anſwer to this *Queſtion* will diſcover the *Criterion* of *Miracles*, which muſt be ſuppoſed to have all the former particulars; (They are *unaccountable beyond the powers of meer nature*, and *done by Agents ſupernatural*) and to theſe muſt be ſuperadded. (4.) That they have *peculiar circumſtances* that ſpeak them of a *Divine original*. Their *mediate Authors* declare them to *be ſo*, and *they* are alwayes perſons of *Simplicity*, *Truth*, and *Holineſs*, *void* of *Ambition*, and all *ſecular Deſigns*. They ſeldom uſe *Ceremonies*, or *natural Applications*, and yet ſurmount all the *activities* of *known nature*. They work thoſe wonders, not to raiſe *admiration*, or out of the *vanity* to be *talk't* of, but to *ſeal* and *confirm* ſome *divine Doctrine*, or *Commiſſion*, in which the *good*, and *happineſs* of the world is concern'd. I ſay, by ſuch *circumſtances* as *theſe*, *wonderful* actions are *known* to be from a *Divine* cauſe, and *that makes*, and *diſtinguiſheth* a *Miracle*.

And thus I am prepared for an *anſwer* to the *Objection*, to which I make this

brief return, That though WITCHES by their *Confederate Spirit* do thoſe *odde*, and *aſtoniſhing* things we believe of them, yet are they no *Miracles*, there being evidence enough from the *badneſs* of their *lives*, and the *ridiculous ceremonies* of their *performances*, from their *malice* and *miſchievous deſigns*, that the *POWER* that works, and the end for which thoſe things are done, is not *Divine*, but *Diabolical*. And by *ſingular providence* they are not ordinarily permitted, as much as to *pretend* to any *new ſacred Diſcoveries* in matters of *Religion*, or to act any thing for *confirmation* of *Doctrinal Impoſtures*. So that whether *Miracles* are *ceaſed*, or not, *theſe* are *none*. And that ſuch *Miracles* as are only *ſtrange*, and *unaccountable* performances, above the common *methods* of *art* or *nature* are not *ceas'd*, we have a late great evidence in the famous *GREATRAK*; concerning whom it will not be impertinent to adde the following *account* which I had in a *Letter* from the Reverend Dr. *R.* Dean of *C.* a perſon of great *veracity*, and a *Philoſopher*. This learned Gentleman then is pleaſed thus to write.

'The great diſcourſe now at the *Coffee*-Houſes,

'Houſes, and every where, is about Mr. 'G. the famous *Iriſh Stroker*, concerning 'whom it is like you expect an account 'from me; He undergoes various cen-'ſures here, ſome take him to be a *Conju-'rer*, and ſome an *Impoſtor*, but others 'again *adore* him as an *Apoſtle*. I confeſs 'I think the man is free from all *deſign*, of 'a very *agreeable* converſation, not addict-'ed to any *Vice*, nor to any *Sect*, or *Party*, 'but is, I believe, a *ſincere Proteſtant*. I 'was three weeks together with him at my 'Lord *Conwayes*, and ſaw him, I think, lay 'his hands upon a thouſand perſons; and 'really there is ſome thing in it more then 'ordinary; but I am convinc'd it is not 'miraculous. I have ſeen *pains* ſtrangely 'fly before his hand till he hath chaſed 'them out of the body, *dimneſs cleared*, 'and *deafneſs* cured by his *touch*; twenty 'perſons at ſeveral times in *Fits* of the 'Falling Sickneſs, were in two or three 'minutes brought to themſelves, ſo as to 'tell where their pain was, and then he 'hath purſued it till he hath driven it out 'at ſome extream part; *Running Sores* 'of the *Kings Evil* dryed up, and *Ker-'nels* brought to a *Suppuration* by his hand,

'*grievous Sores* of many months date, in 'few dayes *healed*, *Obstructions*, and *Stop-*'*pings removed*, *Cancerous Knots* in the 'breast *dissolved*, &c.

'But yet I have many reasons to per-'swade me, that nothing of all this is *mi-*'*raculous*; He pretends not to give *Testi-*'*mony* to any *Doctrine*, the manner of his '*operation* speaks it to be *natural*, the *cure* 'seldom succeeds without *reiterated* '*touches*, his *Patients* often *relapse*, he *fails* '*frequently*, he can do nothing where there 'is any *Decay* in nature, and *many Distem-*'*pers* are not at all obedient to his *touch*. 'So that I confess, I refer all his vertue to 'his *particular temper* and *complexion*, and 'I take his *Spirits* to be a kinde of *Elixir*, 'and *universal Ferment*, and that he cures '(as Dr. *M.* expresseth it) by a *sanative Contagion*.

This Sir, was the *First Account* of the *Healer*, I had from that Reverend Person, which with me signifies more, then the *attestations* of multitudes of *ordinary Reporters*; and no doubt but it will do so likewise, with all that know that excellent mans singular *integrity* and *judgment*. But besides this, upon my inquiry into some other par-

particulars about this matter, I received theſe further Informations.

'As for Mr. *G.* what opinion he hath of 'his *own Gift*, and how he came to know 'it? I anſwer, He hath a different appre-'henſion of it from *yours*, and *mine*, and 'certainly believing it to be an *immediate* 'Gift from heaven; and 'tis no wonder, 'for he is *no Philoſopher*. And you will 'wonder leſs, when you hear *how* he came 'to *know* it, as I have often received it 'from his own mouth. About three or four 'years ago he had a ſtrong *impulſe* upon his 'ſpirit, that continually perſued him what-'ever he was about, at his *Buſineſs*, or *De-'votion*, *alone*, or in *company*, that ſpake 'to him by this *inward ſuggeſtion* [*I have* 'given thee the gift of curing the Evil.] 'This *ſuggeſtion* was ſo *importunate*, that 'he complained to his Wife, That he 'thought he was haunted: She appre-'hended it as an *extravagancy* of *Fancy*, 'but he told her he believed there was 'more in it, and was reſolved to try. He 'did not long want opportunity. There 'was a neighbour of his grievouſly affli-'cted with the *Kings-Evil*, He ſtroked her, 'and the effect ſucceeded. And for about a

'twelve-month together he pretended to 'cure no other Diſtemper. But then the '*Ague* being very rife in the Neighbour-'hood, the ſame *Impulſe* after the ſame 'manner ſpoke within him, [*I have given 'thee the gift of curing the Ague*;] and 'meeting with perſons in their *Fits*, and 'taking them by the hand, or laying his 'hand upon their Breaſts, the *Ague* left 'them. About half a year after the accu-'ſtomed *Impulſe* became more *general*, 'and ſuggeſted to him [*I have given thee* + '*the gift of Healing*:] and then he at-'tempted all Diſeaſes *indifferently*. And 'though he ſaw ſtrange effects, yet he 'doubted whether the cauſe were any 'vertue that came from him, or the peo-'ples fancy: To convince him of his *in-'credulity*, as he lay one night in bed, one 'of his hands was ſtruck *dead*, and the 'uſual *Impulſe* ſuggeſted to him to make 'tryal of his vertue upon himſelf, which 'he did, ſtroking it with his other hand, 'and then it immediately returned to its 'former *livelineſs*. This was repeated 'two or three nights (or mornings) to-'gether.

'This

'This is his *Relation*, and I believe 'there is ſo much ſincerity in the perſon, 'that he tells no more than what he be-'lieves to be *true*. To ſay that this Impulſe 'too was but a *reſult* of his *temper*, and 'that it is but like *Dreams* that are uſually 'according to mens *conſtitutions*, doth not 'ſeem a *probable account* of the *Phæno-'menon*. Perhaps ſome may think it more 'likely, that ſome *Genius* who underſtood 'the *ſanative vertue* of his *Complexion*, 'and the *readineſs* of his *minde*, and *abi-'lity* of his *body*, to put it in execution, 'might give him notice of *that* which o-'therwiſe might have been for ever *un-'known* to him, and ſo the *Gift* of *God* 'had been to no purpoſe.

This Sir, is my Learned and Reverend Friends *Relation*, and I judge his *Reflecti-ons* as *ingenious*, as his *report* is *ſincere*. I ſhall ſay no more about it but *this*, that many of thoſe *matters* of *Fact*, have been ſince *critically inſpected* and *examined* by ſeveral *ſagacious* and *deep* ſearches of the ROYAL SOCIETY, whom we may ſuppoſe as unlikely to be deceived by a *contrived Impoſture*, as any perſons extant.

And

And now, Sir, 'tis fit that I relieve your patience; and I shall do so, when I have said, that *You* can abundantly *prove*, what I have thus attempted to *defend*: And that among the many Obligations your *Country* hath to you, for the *Wisdom* and *Diligence* of your Endeavours in its service; your *Ingenious Industry* for the *Detecting* of those *Vile Practicers*, is not the least *considerable*. To which I will adde no more, but the *Confession* who it is that hath given you all this trouble; which I know you are ready to *pardon*, to the respect and good *Intentions* of

SIR,

Your Affectionate and Obliged

Honourer and Servant,

J. G.

PALPABLE EVIDENCE OF SPIRITS AND Witchcraft:

In an ACCOUNT of the *Fam'd Diſturbance* by the

DRUMMER,

In the Houſe of

M. *MOMPESSON.*

With

Another *Modern* and *Certain Relation.*

In two LETEERS,

One to the Right Honourable

William, Lord *Brereton;*

The other, to the Learned

Dr. *Henry More,* D.D.

London. Printed by *E. C.* for *James Collins,* at the Kings Head in *Weſtminſter-Hall,* 1668.

To the Right Honourable,

WILLIAM,

Lord *Brereton.*

My Lord,

THE ENTERTAINMENTS your *Lordſhips* Diſcourſe hath often given me in matters of the beſt conſequence, have left a *reliſh* on my minde, which 'tis a pleaſure to me to remember and acknowledge. And *certainly*, of all the matters the *various*, and *buſie* minde of man imployes it ſelf in, there is nothing more *agreeable*, and *importing*, than the *enquiries* of the *other world*, about which your Lordſhip is ſo *much*, and ſo *affectionately* concern'd. *Indeed*, as things are for the preſent, the LAND of SPIRITS is a kinde of *AMERICA*, and not well diſcover'd *Region*; yea, it ſtands in the *Map* of *humane Science* like *unknown Tracts*, fill'd up with *Mountains*, *Seas*, and *Monſters*:

ſters: For we meet with little in the *Immaterial Hæmiſphere*, but *Doubts*, *Uncertainties*, and *Fables*; and whether we owe our ignorance in theſe matters, to the *nature* of the *things* themſelves, or to the *miſtakes* and *ſloth* of thoſe that have enquired about them, I leave to your Lordſhips *happy ſagacity* to determine. Only, perhaps more of the *ſupra mundane* light had ſhone in upon us, but for *Superſtition*, *Deſpair*, and the *wranglings* of the *Schools*. And did the *SOCIETY* of which your Lordſhip is an illuſtrious Member, direct ſome of its *wary*, and *luciferous* enquiries towards the *World* of *Spirits*, I believe we ſhould have other kinde of *Metaphyſicks*, than thoſe are taught by men that love to write great Volumns, and to be *ſubtil* about *nothing*. For we know not any thing of the world we live in, but by *experiment*, and the *Phænomena*; and there is the ſame way of *ſpeculating immaterial* nature, by *extraordinary Events* and *Apparitions*, which poſſibly might be improved to *notices* not *contemptible*, were there a *Cautious*, and *Faithful Hiſtory* made of thoſe *certain* and *uncommon appearances*. At leaſt it would be a *ſtanding evidence* againſt

againſt SADDUCISM, to which the preſent Age is ſo *unhappily* diſpoſed, and a *ſenſible Argument* of our *Immortality*.

NOW though you, *My Lord* are in no danger of that *cold* and *deſperate Diſeaſe*, the *Disbelief* of *Spirits* and *Apparitions*; nor need *confirmation* in the *Article* of our *future exiſtence*, yet being ingaged by my *promiſe*, and *more* by my *deſire* of ſerving you, to ſend your Lordſhip the *Story* of the *DRUMMER* at Mr. *MOMPESSONS* houſe at *Tedworth*, (one of the moſt remarkable ones in our time for the confirmation of that great affair) I have now at length put the moſt of thoſe particulars I could obtain, into your hands; which I had ſooner done, but that I have been in a long expectation of *additional* circumſtances, which Mr. *Mompeſſon* promiſed me. But his occaſions it ſeems have hindered the performance; and *mine* by reaſon of the diſtance of our abodes, would not permit *perſonal ſolicitations*, which poſſibly might have expedited the matter. To which I might adde, My Lord, that a perſon intimately concerned in it, was unwilling Mr. *M.* ſhould meddle any more with

with Relations, leſt thereby the *troubleſome gueſt* ſhould be awakened to an *unwelcome* return; which *fear* though perhaps but a *panick*, had yet an intereſt in the fruſtrating my expectations of the deſired *Additionals*. *That* which I had from the Gentleman himſelf, I now ſend your Lordſhip in the ſubſequent *Relation*, which you may pleaſe to take as follows.

MASTER

MASTER *JOHN MOMPESSON* of *Tedworth* in *Wiltſhire*, being about the middle of *March*, in the year 1661. at a neighbouring Town, called *Ludgarſhal*, heard a *Drum* beat there, and being concerned as a *Commiſſion Officer* in the *Militia*, he enquired of the *Bayliffe* of the Town, at whoſe Houſe he then was, what it meant. The Bayliffe told him, that they had for ſome dayes been troubled by that *Idle Drummer*, who demanded money of the Conſtable by vertue of a pretended paſs, which he thought was counterfeit. Upon this Information Maſter *Mompeſſon* ſent for the fellow, and ask't him, by what *Authority* he went up and down the Countrey in that manner, demanding money, and keeping a clutter with his *Drum*? The *Drummer* anſwered, he had good *Authority*, and produced his paſs, with a warrant under the hands of Sir *William Cawly*, and Colonel *Ayliffe* of *Gretexham*. Theſe papers diſcover'd the knavery, for Mr. *Mompeſſon* knowing thoſe Gentlemens hands, found that his paſs, and warrant were *forgeries*; and upon

the diſcovery, commanded the *vagrant* to put off his *Drum*, and charged the Conſtable to carry him to the next *Juſtice* of *Peace*, to puniſh him according to the deſert of his *Inſolence* and *Roguery*. The fellow then confeſt the *cheat*, and begg'd earneſtly for his *Drum*. But Mr. *Mompeſſon* told him, that if he underſtood from Collonel *Ayliffe*, whoſe *Drummer* he pretended to be, that he had been an honeſt man, he ſhould have it again; but that in the interim he would ſecure it. So he left the *Drum* with the Bayliffe, and the *Drummer* in the Conſtables hands; who it ſeems *after*, upon intreaty, let him go.

About the midſt of *April* following, when Mr. *M.* was preparing for a Journey to *London*, the Bayliffe ſent the *Drum* to his houſe; and being returned, his Wife told him, that they had been much affrighted in the night by *Thieves*, in his abſence, and that the Houſe had like to have been broken up. He had not been at home above three nights, when the ſame noiſe returned that had diſturbed his Family when he was abroad: It was a very great *knocking* at his Doors, and the out-ſides of his Houſe. Mr. *M.* aroſe, and with a brace

brace of Piſtols in his hands, went up and down, ſearching for the cauſe of the Diſturbance. He open'd the door, where the great knocking was, and preſently the noiſe was at another: he opened that alſo, and went forth, rounding his Houſe, but could diſcover nothing; only he ſtill heard a ſtrange noiſe, and hollow ſound; but could not perceive what was the occaſion of it. When he was returned to his Bed, the noiſe was a *thumping* and *Drumming* on the top of his Houſe, which continued a good ſpace, and then by degrees went off into the Air.

After this *It* would come 5 nights together, and abſent it ſelf 3. knocking very hard on the out-ſides of the Houſe, which is, moſt of it of Board. This *It* did conſtantly as they were going to ſleep, either early or late. After a months racket without, *It* came into the room where the *Drum* lay, where it would be 4 or 5 nights in 7, making great hollow ſounds, and ſenſibly ſhaking the Beds and Windows. *It* would come within half an hour after they were in Bed, and ſtay almoſt two. The ſign of its approach was an *hurling* in the Air over the Houſe; and at its receſs they

ſhould hear a *Drum* beat, like the breaking up of a Guard. It continued in this Room for the ſpace of two months; the Gentleman himſelf lying there to obſerve *It*: and though it was very troubleſome in the fore-part of the night, yet after two hours diſturbance, it would deſiſt and leave all in quietneſs: At which time perhaps the Laws of the *Black Society* required its preſence at the general *Rendezvous* elſewhere.

About this time the Gentleman's Wife was brought to Bed; the noiſe came a little that night ſhe was in Travail, but then forbore for three weeks till ſhe had recover'd ſtrength. After this *civil ceſſation*, it returned in a *ruder* manner than before, applying wholly to the younger Children; whoſe Bedſteads it would beat with that violence, that all preſent would expect, when they would fall in pieces. Thoſe that laid their hands upon them, could feel no blows, but perceived them to ſhake exceedingly. It would for an hour together beat, what they call ROUNDHEADS and CUCKOLDS — the TATTOO, and ſeveral other Points of Warre, and that as dexterouſly as

any

any Drummer. After which it would get under the Bed, and ſcratch there as if it had Iron Tallons. It would lift the Children up in their Beds, follow them from one room to another, and for a while applyed to none particularly but them.

There was a Cockloft in the Houſe which had been obſerved hitherto to be untroubled; thither they removed their children, putting them to bed while it was fair day: and yet they were no ſooner covered, but the *unwelcome Viſitant* was come, and played his Tricks as before.

On the 5th. of *Novemb.* 1662. it kept a mighty noiſe, and one of the Gentlemans Servants obſerving two Boards in the Childrens room that ſeemed to move, he bid it give him one of them, and preſently the Board came within a yard of him. The Fellow added, *Nay, let me have it in my hand*: upon which it was ſhuft quite home. The man thruſt it back, and the *Dæmon* returned it to him, and ſo from one to another at leaſt 20 times together, till the Gentleman forbad his Servant ſuch *Familiarities*. That morning it left a *Sulphurous ſmell* behind it, very *diſpleaſant*, and *offenſive*; which poſſibly, *My Lord*, ſome

would conjecture to be a ſmack of the *bituminous* matter brought from the *mediterranious vaults*, to which we may ſuppoſe the *vehicles* of thoſe *impure Spirits* to be nearly allyed. At night the Miniſter of the place, one Mr. *Cragge*, and many of the Neighbours came to the Houſe, and went to prayer at the Childrens Bed-ſide, where at that time *It* was very troubleſome, and loud. During the time of *Prayer* it withdrew into the Cockloft, but the Service being ended, it returned; and in the ſight and preſence of the company, the *Chairs* walked about the Room, the Childrens Shooes were thrown over their heads, and every looſe thing moved about the Chamber: Alſo a Bed-ſtaffe was thrown at the *Miniſter*, which hit him on the Leg, but ſo favourably, that a lock of Wooll could not have fallen more ſoftly. And a circumſtance more was obſerv'd, *viz.* that it never in the leaſt roul'd, nor mov'd from the place where it lighted.

The Gentleman perceiving that *It* ſo much perſecuted the little Children, lodg'd them out at a Neighbours Houſe, and took his eldeſt Daughter, who was about 10 years of Age, into his own Chamber; where

where *It* had not been in a month before. But no ſooner was ſhe in Bed, but the troubleſome Gueſt was with her, and continued his unquiet viſits for the ſpace of three weeks, during which time it would beat the *Drum*, and exactly anſwer any Tune that was knock't, or call'd for. The Houſe where the Gentleman had lodged his Children being full of Strangers, he was forced to take them home again; and becauſe they had never obſerved any diſturbance in the Parlor, he laid them there, where alſo their old Viſitant found them; but at this time troubled them no otherwiſe than by plucking them by the hair, and night-cloathes.

It would ſometimes lift up the Servants with their Beds, and lay them down again gently without any more prejudice, than the fright of being carried to the *Drummers* Quarters. And at other times it would lie like a great weight upon their Feet.

'Twas obſerved, that when the noiſe was loudeſt, and came with the moſt *ſuddain*, and *ſurprizing violence*, yet no Dog would move. The knocking was oft ſo boyſterous and rude, that it hath been heard at a conſiderable diſtance in the

Fields, and awakened the Neighbours in the Village, none of which live very near this house.

About the latter end of *Decemb.* 1662. The *Drummings* were less frequent, and the noise the *Fiend* made, was a *gingling* as it had been of money; occasioned, as 'twas thought, by some discourse of an antient Gentlewoman, Mother to Mr. *M.* (who was one day saying to a Neighbour that talked of *Fairies leaving money*, That she should like it well, if it would leave them some to make amends for the trouble it made them) for that night there was a great *chinking* of money all the house over; but he that rose earliest next morning, was ne're a groat the richer. After this it desisted from its *ruder noises*, and imployed it self about little *apish* Tricks, and less troublesome *Caprichio's*. On *Christmas-Eve*, an hour before day, one of the little Boyes arising out of his Bed, was hit on a sore place in his Heel, by the latch of the Door, which the *waggish Dæmon* had pluckt out and thrown at him. The Pin that fastned it was so small, that 'twas for the credit of his *Opticks*, that he pick't it out without Candle light. The night af-

ter

ter *Chriſtmas-Day It* threw all the old Gentlewomans Cloaths about the Room, and hid her *Bible* in the Aſhes. In ſuch *impertinent ludricous fegaries*, it was frequent. And ſuch paſſages are to me conſiderable intimations that the *Imps* of *Witches*, and other troubleſome *appearing Spirits*, are not alwayes *Devils*, as I have diſcours't in my *Conſiderations* about *Witchcraft*.

After *this* the *Spirit* was very *troubleſome* to a Servant of Mr. *Mompeſſons*, who was a ſtout Fellow, and of ſober converſation. In the Relation of whoſe *vexations*, I beg your Lordſhips leave to be a little leſs ſolemn. This gameſter then had the *hardineſs* to lye within during the greateſt diſturbance. His Maſter permitted him to give this proof of his Courage, and lodg'd him in the next room to his own. There was *John engariſon'd*, and provided for the aſſault with a *truſty* Sword, and other implements of War. And for ſome time there was ſcarce a night paſt, without ſome doubty action and encounter, in which the ſucceſs was various. One while *John*'s bag and baggage would be in the Enemies *power*, *Doublet* and *Breeches* ſurpri-

zed,

zed, and his *Shooes* raiſed in *rebellion* a-gainſt him; and then *luſty John* by *Dint* of Weapon recovers all again, ſuppreſ-ſeth the *inſurrection* of his *Shooes*, and holds his own in ſpight of *Satan*, and the *Drummer*. And for the moſt part our Combatant came off with honour and ad-vantage, except when his enemy out-watch'd and ſurprized him, and then he's made a priſoner, bound hand and foot, and at the mercy of the *Goblin*; till he hath got the opportunity of recovering his *Diabolical Blade*, and then our Champion is in good plight again. Sometimes the Scuffle was ſo *great* and *loud*, that Mr. *M.* himſelf was fain to come in to *John's* aſ-ſiſtance, which he took in very ill part, as a diſtruſt of his courage; as if he were not ſingly able to deal with the *Devil*, who is a very *Coward*, and fights with the diſ-advantage of a *Chain* at his *Heels*. After theſe contraſts, Sir *Tho. Bennet's* Son whoſe workman the *Drummer* had ſometimes been, came to the houſe, and told Mr. *M.* ſome words that he had ſpoken, which it ſeems was not well reſented; for as ſoon as they were in bed, the *Drum* came with a mighty *rattle*: the Gentleman aroſe and

call'd

call'd his man to him, who lay with *John*; and no ſooner was Mr. *Bennets* Servant gone, but there came a ruſhing noiſe as if it had been a Gentlewoman in Silk, to *Johns* bed-ſide. Our *Champion* takes the *Alarm*, and catches at his *Sword* to aſſault the *Lady*, contrary to all the rules of *Knight errantry*. 'Twas with much difficulty and tugging that he got it into his poſſeſſion: for it ſeems the *Aiery Damoſel* was not willing to be courted with *John's Cutting Complements*: But being poſſeſt of that *dreadful Blade*, the *Amazon* of the *Aire* withdrew her ſelf from the danger of his provoked ire, and left the Champion to admire the effects of his courage. But enough of *plaiſance* upon the occaſion of *John's Chivalry*, and *Encounters*.

By ſeveral inſtances it hath been diſcover'd, that this *Spirit* was *afraid* of a *Weapon*, or at leaſt pretended to be ſo; for when they uſed a *Sword*, it alwayes cautiouſly avoided. And of this my Lord, I have given an account elſewhere.

About the beginning of *Jan.* 1662. They were wont to hear a *ſinging* in the *Chimney*, before *It* came down. And one night about this time, Lights were ſeen in the

the Houſe; one of which came into Mr. *Mompeſſons* Chamber, which ſeemed *blue* and *glimmering*, and cauſed a great ſtiffneſs in their eyes that ſaw it. An intimation that this *Dæmon* had its *vehicle* from the *bituminous Mines* of the *lower Regions*. After the light, ſomething was heard coming up the Stairs, as if it had been ſome one without Shooes. The light was alſo 4 or 5 times ſeen in the Childrens Chamber; and the Maids confidently affirm, that the doors were at leaſt ten times opened, and ſhut in their ſight. They heard a noiſe at the ſame time when the Doors were opened, as if half a dozen had entred in together. After which ſome were heard to walk about the room, and one ruſled as if it had been in Silk. The like Mr. *M.* himſelf once heard.

During the time of the knocking, when many were preſent, a Gentleman of the company ſaid, *Satan*, If the *Drummer* ſet thee a work, give three knocks and no more, which it did very diſtinctly, and ſtopt. Then the Gentleman knockt, to ſee if it would anſwer him as it was wont, but it remained quiet. He further tryed it the ſame way, bidding it, for confirmation,

if

if it were the *Drummer*, to give 5 knocks and no more that night, which it did accordingly, and was ſilent all the night after. This was done in the preſence of Sir *Tho. Chamberlain* of *Oxfordſhire*, and ſeveral others.

On *Saturday* morning, *Jan.* 10. an hour before day the *Drum* was beaten upon the out-ſides of Mr. *Mompeſſons* Chamber, from whence it went to the other end of the Houſe, where ſome Gentlemen, Strangers, lay, playing at their door, and without, 4 or 5 ſeveral Tunes, and ſo went off into the Air.

The next night a Smith of the Village lying with *John*, they heard a noiſe in the room, as if one had been ſhooing of a Horſe there; and ſomewhat came as it were with a pair of *Pincers*, and ſnipt at the Smiths Noſe moſt part of the Night.

One morning Mr. *Mompeſſon* riſing early to go a Journey, heard a great noiſe below, where the Children lay, and running down with a Piſtol in his hand, heard this voice, *A Witch, a Witch*, as they had alſo heard it once before; but upon his entrance all was quiet. Having one night played ſome little pranks at Mr. *Mompeſ-*

ſon's

ſon's Beds feet, it went into another Bed, where lay one of his Daughters, where *It* paſſed from ſide to ſide, and lifted her up as it went under her. At that time there were three kindes of noiſes in the Bed. They endeavoured to thruſt at *It* with a *Sword*, but it very carefully avoided them, ſtill skipping under the Childe, when they were ready to thruſt. The night after *It* came *panting*, like a Dog out of breath; upon which one took a Bedſtaff to knock, which was taken out of her hand, and thrown away. Upon this company came up, and preſently the room was filled with a *bloomy noiſome* ſmell, and was very *hot*, though without Fire, and in midſt of a very *ſharp* and *ſevere* Winter. *It* continued in the Bed, panting, and ſcratching an hour and half, and then went into the next Chamber, where it knockt a little, and ſeemed to rattle a chain. Thus it did for two or three nights together.

After this the old Gentlewomans Bible was found in the Aſhes open, the paper ſide being downwards. Mr. *Mompeſſon* took it up, and obſerved that it lay open at the third Chapter of S. *Mark*, in which there

is

mention is of the *unclean ſpirits falling down before our Saviour*; of his *giving power to the* 12 *to caſt out Devils*, and of the *Scribes* opinion, that he *caſt them out through Beelzebub*. The next night they ſtrewed aſhes over the Chamber, to ſee what *impreſſions* it would leave. And in the morning, found in one place the reſemblance of a great *Claw*, in another of a leſſer; ſome Letters in another, which they could make nothing of; beſides many *Circles* and *Scratches* in the Aſhes: all which I ſuppoſe were *ludicrous* devices, by which the *ſportful Dæmon* made *paſtime* with humane *Ignorance* and *Credulity*.

About this time, as I formerly told your Lordſhip, my curioſity drew me to the Houſe, to be a witneſs of ſome of thoſe ſtrange paſſages. It had ceas't from its pranks of *Drumming*, and *ruder noiſes* before I came; but moſt of the more remarkable circumſtances before related, were confirmed to me there by ſeveral of the Neighbours together, who had been preſent at them. At that time it uſed to haunt the Children; I heard it ſcratch very loudly and diſtinctly in their Bed, behinde the Boulſter. I thruſt in my

hand

hand to the place where the noiſe ſeemed to be, upon which *It* withdrew to another part of the Bed; and upon the taking out of my hand, it returned as before. I had heard of its imitating noiſes, and therefore made the trial, by ſcratching certain determinate times upon the Sheet, as 5. and 7. and 10. which *It* did alſo, and ſtill ſtopt at my number. After a while *It* went into the midſt of the Bed under the Children, and there *panted* like a Dog, very loudly. I put my hand upon the place, and felt the Bed bear up againſt it, as if ſomething had thruſt it up; but by graſping, could feel nothing but the Feathers: and there was nothing under it. The motion *It* cauſed by this *panting* was ſo ſtrong, that it ſhook the Room, and Windows. It continued thus for more than half an hour, while I ſtayed, and as long after. I was certain there could be no *fallacy* nor *deceit* in theſe paſſages, which I critically examined; and I am ſure there was nothing of *fear*, or *imagination* in the caſe; for I was no more concern'd than I am at the Writing this Relation.

But to proceed with Mr. *Mompeſſon*'s own particulars.

There

There came one morning a light into the Childrens Chamber, and the voice, crying, *A Witch, a Witch*, for at leaſt an hundred times together. Mr. *M.* ſeeing at a time ſome Wood move that was in the Chimney, when no one was near, diſcharged a Piſtol into it; after which they found ſeveral drops of Blood on the Hearth, and in divers places of the Stairs.

There was a ſeeming *calm* in the Houſe for 2 or 3 nights after the diſcharge of the *Piſtol*; but then it came again, applying *It* ſelf to a little childe, newly taken from Nurſe; which It ſo perſecuted, that It would not let the poor Infant reſt for two nights together, nor ſuffer a Candle in the Room, but would carry them away lighted up the *Chimney*, or throw them under the Bed. It ſo ſcared this Childe, by leaping upon it, that for ſome hours it could not be recovered out of the fright. Inſomuch as they were enforced again to re-remove the Children out of the Houſe. The next night after they were gone, ſomething about midnight came up the Stairs, and knock't at Mr. *Mempeſſon*'s door; but he lying ſtill, *It* went up another pair of Stairs, to his man's Chamber, to whom *It*

appeared, ſtanding at his Beds foot. The exact ſhape and proportion he could not diſcover; but ſaw a great body, with two *red* and *glaring* eyes, which for ſome time were fixt ſteddily upon him, and at length diſappeared.

Another night Strangers being preſent, *It* purr'd in the Children's Bed like a *Cat*; and at that time the Cloaths and Children were lift up from the Bed, and 6. men could not keep them down. Upon this they removed them thence, intending to have ript up the Bed. But they were no ſooner laid in another, but this ſecond Bed was more troubled than the former. It continued thus 4. hours, and ſo beat the Childrens Legs againſt the Beds-Poſts, that they were forced to ariſe, and ſit up all night. After this it would empty Chamber-pots into their Beds, and ſtrew them with Aſhes; and that though they were never ſo carefully watch't. It put a long piked Iron into Mr. *Mompeſſon*'s Bed, and into his Mothers a naked Knife upright. It would fill porrengers with Aſhes, throw every thing about, and keep a noiſe all day.

About the beginning of *April*, 1663. a Gen-

Gentleman that lay in the houſe had all his money turn'd black in his Pockets. And Mr. *Mompeſſon*, one morning coming into his Stable, found the Horſe he was wont to ride, on the ground, with one of his hinder Legs in his mouth, and ſo faſtned there, that 'twas difficult work for ſeveral men, with a Leaver, to get it out. After this there were ſome other remarkable things; but my *account* goes no farther: Only Mr. *Mompeſſon* told me, that afterwards the houſe was ſeveral nights beſet with 7. or 8. in the ſhape of men, who as ſoon as a Gun was diſcharged, would ſhuffle away together into an Arbour.

THE DRUMMER was tryed at the *Aſſize* at *Salisbury*, for ſome petty Fellonies he had committed; and there theſe paſſages alſo were produc'd, and urg'd. He was condemn'd to the *Iſlands*, and was accordingly ſent away: but I know not how, made a ſhift to come back again. And 'tis obſervable, that during all the time of his reſtraint, and abſence, the Houſe was in quiet; but as ſoon as ever he came back, the diſturbance alſo returned. He had been a Souldier under *CROMWEL*, and uſed to talk much of gallant

Books he had of an odde Fellow's, who was counted a *Wizard*. And upon this occaſion I'le mention to your Lordſhip a paſſage, which I had not from Mr. *Mompeſſon*; but yet is not irrelative.

A Gentleman, who was with me at the Houſe, being in company with one who practiſeth *Phyſick*, and pretends to *ſtrange* matters, was telling the Doctor this *Relation*: The *Phyſician* told him, he was ſure 'twas nothing but a *Rendezvous* of *Witches*, and that for an hundred pounds he would undertake to clear the houſe from all diſturbance. In conſequence of which diſcourſe he talk'd many high things; and having got my friend alone in another Room apart from the company, ſaid, he would ſhew him he could do ſomething more than ordinary, and askt him who he deſired to *ſee*. The Gentleman had no great confidence in his talk, but yet he preſſing that he would name ſome one, ſaid, He deſired to ſee no one ſo much as his Wife. Upon this the Doctor took up a Glaſs that was in the room, and ſetting it down again, bid him look in it, which he did; and profeſſeth that he ſaw the perfect *Image* of his *Wife*: which is the

the more ſtrange, in that this perſon was an abſolute ſtranger to her. This my Lord, my friend averr'd to mee for a certainty; and he is one in whoſe word I can repoſe, being a man very ſober, and intelligent. I underſtand ſince, that this Doctor hath the name of a very odde perſon among his Neighbours; and not only among the credulous, and eaſie vulgar, but even among thoſe of more ſenſe and judgment.

THUS MY LORD, I have given your Honour the ſumme of the *Relation*, which I extracted from Mr. *Mompeſſon*'s own Letters. The ſame particulars alſo he writ to the Doctor of the Chair in *Oxford*. He is a Gentleman of whoſe *veracity* in this account I know not the leaſt ground of ſuſpicion, he being neither *vain*, nor *credulous*; but a *diſcreet*, *ſagacious*, and *manly* perſon. You know, my *Lord*, the credit of *matters* of *fact* depends much upon the conſideration of the *Relators*; and if *They* cannot be *deceived* themſelves, nor ſuppoſed any wayes intereſſed to *impoſe* upon others, we *may*, and we *ought* to acquieſce in their *reports*: For upon theſe circumſtances all *humane Faith* is grounded, and *matter* of *Fact* is not capable

pable of any proof beſides, but *that* of *immediate ſenſible Evidence*. Now this Gentleman cannot be thought *ignorant himſelf* of the *Truth*, and *certainty* of what he relates, it having been done in his *Family*, and himſelf a *Witneſs*, and that not of a little circumſtance, or two, but of a hundred; not for once, or twice only, but for the ſpace of ſome years; during which time he was a *concerned*, and *inquiſitive* obſerver. So that it cannot with any ſhew of reaſon be ſuppoſed that any of his Servants abuſed him, ſince in all that time he muſt needs have *detected* the *deceit*: and what intereſt could any of his Family have had (if it had been poſſible to have managed it without diſcovery) to continue ſo *long*, ſo *troubleſome*, and ſo *injurious* a *fallacy*. Nor can it with any thing of more *probability* be imagined, that his own *melancholly* deluded him; ſince (beſides that, he is no *craſie* or *imaginative* perſon) that humour could not have been ſo laſting and *pertinacious*: or if it were ſo in him, can we think he infected his whole Family, and thoſe Multitudes of his Neighbours and Others, that think themſelves as well aſſured of thoſe acti-

actions, of which they were Witneſſes, as himſelf? Theſe are *wilde Suppoſals*, and not like to tempt any but thoſe whoſe *Wills* are their *Reaſons*. The *main Relator* then *knew himſelf*, whether what he ſaid was *True*, and whether thoſe things which were acted in his Houſe were *Juggles*, and contrived *Impoſtures*, or *extraordinary realities*. And if ſo, What Intereſt could he ſerve in maintaining ſuch a *cheat*, if it were one, and he knew it to be ſo?

He ſuffered by it in his *Name*, in his *Eſtate*, in his *Affairs*, and in the general *Peace* of his *Family*. Thoſe that believ'd not any thing of *Spirits*, or *Witchcraft* in thoſe *Tranſactions*, (which were not a few) took him for an *Impoſtor*. Thoſe that *did*, many of them judg'd the permiſſion of ſuch an extraordinary evil, to be the *Judgment* of God upon him, for ſome *notorious impiety*. Thus his *Name* was continually expoſed to *Cenſure*, and his *Eſtate* ſuffered by the concourſe of people from all parts to his houſe, whom he could not diſmiſs without the *Civility* of an Entertainment. And beſides this, he was hindered, and diverted from the proſecution of his Affairs, and he could

hardly get, or retain any in his Service. To which, if I adde the continual *hurry* that his Family was in; the *affrights*, *vexations*, and *toſſings* up and down of his Children, and the *Watchings* and *Diſturbance* of his whole Houſe; in all which himſelf muſt needs be the moſt concerned perſon. I ſay, the putting together of theſe Circumſtances will be evidence enough, that he could have no intereſt in deſigning to put a cheat upon the world, in which he would moſt of all have injured, and abuſed himſelf. Or, if he ſhould have deſigned and managed ſo *incredible*, ſo *unprofitable* an Impoſture, 'tis ſtrange he ſhould trouble himſelf ſo long in actuating an *abuſive Artifice*, only to *deceive*, and to be talk't of. And 'tis yet more ſo, that none of thoſe numerous *inquiſitive* perſons, that came thither purpoſely to *Criticiſe*, and examine the truth of thoſe matters, could make any *Diſcoveries*. Eſpecially ſince many came prejudiced againſt the *belief* of ſuch things in *general*, and others reſolved before-hand againſt the belief of *this*; and all were permitted all poſſible freedom of *ſearch* and *inquiry*: And after things were weighed

weighed and examined, ſeveral that were prejudicated enough before, went away ſtrongly convicted. To which I adde, That there are divers *particulars* in the *Story*, in which no *abuſe* or *deceit* could have been practiſed; as the *motion* of *Boards* and *Chairs* of themſelves, the *beating* of a *Drum* in the midſt of a *Room*, and in the *Air*, when nothing was to be ſeen; the *heat* that fill'd a whole Room without *Fire* in exceſſive cold Weather: The *Scratching* and *Panting* where nothing ordinary could be ſuſpected for the cauſe; and ſeveral others ſuch like: All which have numbers of ſober and unintereſſed perſons to atteſt them.

'TIS true my Lord, that when the Gentlemen the King ſent were there, the Houſe was *quiet*, and nothing heard, or ſeen that night. And this was *confidently*, and with *triumph* reported by many as an evidence of the *untruth* of the *Story*. But certainly 'twas but *poor Logick* to conclude in *matters* of *Fact* from a *ſingle Negative*, and *ſuch a one* againſt *numerous Affirmatives*; and to inferr that a thing was never done, becauſe omitted at ſuch a ſeaſon; and that *no body* ever *ſaw*, what *this man*, or

or *that* did not. By the same rule of consequence I may say, that there were never any Robbers upon *Salisbury Plains*, because I have often travelled over them, and never met any of those *sorts* of *Violence*; and the French-man inferred well, that said, *There was no Sun in* England, *because he was 6 Weeks here, and never saw it.* This my Lord, is the common Argument of those that deny the *being* of *Apparitions*; They have travel'd all times of the night, and never saw any thing *worse* than *themselves*; and *it may be so:* Therefore Spirits and Apparitions are *Bugs* and *Impostures.* But why do not such Arguers conclude, that there was never a *Cut-Purse* on *Ludgate-Hill*, because they have past that way a hundred times, and were never met with by any of those *nimble practitioners.* Certainly, he that denyes *Apparitions* upon the confidence of this *Negative*, against the vast *heap* of *positive Assurances*, is *credulous*, if he believe there was ever any *High-way-man* in the world, if he himself was never rob'd. And the *Tryals* of *Assises*, and *Attestations* of those that *have*, if he will be just, ought to move his *assent* no more in this case,

caſe, than in that of *Witches* and *Apparitions* which have the very ſame evidence. But for the particular of the quiet of Mr. *Mompeſſon*'s Houſe, while the *Courtiers* were there, it may be remembred, and conſidered, that the *Diſturbances* were not alwayes *conſtant*, but *interrupted* by *intervals* of *Ceſſation*, ſometimes for ſeveral dayes, and ſometimes for weeks, as is mention'd in the Relation; ſome paſſages of which, that record thoſe Ceſſations, were I am ſure written in Mr. *Mompeſſon*'s Letters, before thoſe Gentlemen had been at *Tedworth*. So that its omitting at that time 'tis like was meerly *accidental*; or poſſibly the *malicious Spirit* was not willing to give ſo *publick* a *teſtimony* of *Its being*, and *troubleſome incurſions*, for the convincing thoſe, he had rather ſhould continue in the *disbelief* of his *exiſtence*: but however it were, this circumſtance will afford but a very ſlender *inference* againſt the *credit* of the *Story*, except among thoſe who are willing to take any thing for an *Argument* againſt things they have an intereſt not to acknowledge. There are other exceptions made againſt the Truth of this Relation, and Dr. *H. More*

ſent

ſent me an account of ſome particulars that were *objected* at *Cambridge*, to which I have anſwered in a Letter to him, and have ſent it your Lordſhip in company with this.

THUS, my *Lord*, I have given your Honour the ſum of this Affair; and I have taken notice of, and recorded the *particulars* of the *Relation*, not to ſatisfie *curioſity*, or feed the *humour* that delights in *wonders*, which are but *mean* deſigns, and unbecoming one that pretends to any thing that is *generous*. But I conſider it as a great evidence againſt *Sadduciſm*, the Diſeaſe of our Age. And though thoſe paſſages are not ſo *dreadful*, *tragical*, and *amazing*, as there are ſome related in Stories of this kinde; yet are they never the leſs *probable*, or *true*, for being leſs *prodigious*, and *aſtoniſhing*. And they are ſtrange enough to prove themſelves the *effects* of ſome *inviſible extraordinary Agent*, and to demonſtrate, that there are *SPIRITS* that ſometimes ſenſibly intermeddle in our Affairs. And I think they do it with as many clear circumſtances of evidence as any thing that is extant. For theſe things were not done

long

long ago, or at *far distance*, in an *ignorant* Age, or among a *barbarous people*; they were not seen only by 2 or 3 of the *melancholick*, and *Superstitious*, and reported by those that made them serve the advantage, and interest of a *Faction*. They were not the passages of a *day*, or *night*, nor the *vanishing glances* of an *Apparition*. But those circumstances were *near*, and *late*, *publick*, *frequent*, and of *years continuance*; witnessed by *multitudes* of *competent*, and *unbiast* Attestors, and *acted* in a *searching* and *incredulous* Age; *Arguments* enough for the *conviction* of a *modest*, and *capable reason*.

This Relation, my Lord, you perceive proves the being of *SPIRITS* and *APPARITIONS*, but not so directly that of *WITCHES* and *Diabolick Contracts*; and therefore, while I am about it, I shall adde the other *NARRATIVE* which I promised your Honour, and which I received from the *Justice* of *Peace*, who took the *Examination* upon *Oath*: 'Tis the same Gentleman to whom I directed my Letter about *WITCHCRAFT*, and a very *judicious*, *searching*, and *sagacious* person. He was pleased to give me his own

Copy

Copy of the *Examination*; the ſum of which is in the following *Relation*.

ON SUNDAY, 15. of *Nov.* 1657. about three of the Clock in the afternoon, *Rich. Jones*, then a *ſprightly youth*, about 12. years old, Son of *Henry Jones* of *Shepton Mallet*, in this County of *Somerſet*, being in his Fathers Houſe alone, and perceiving one looking in at the Window, went to the door, where one *Jane Brocks* of the ſame Town (but then by *name* unknown to this Boy) came to him. She deſired him to give her a piece of cloſe Bread, and gave him an *Apple*. After which ſhe alſo ſtroked him down on the right ſide, ſhook him by the hand, and ſo bid him good night. The Youth returned into the houſe, where he had been left well when his Father, and one *Gibſon* went from him: but at their return, which was within an hour, or thereabout, they found him ill, and complaining of his right ſide, in which the pain continued the moſt part of that night: and on Monday following in the evening, the Boy roaſted the Apple he had of *Jane Brooks*; aud having eaten about half of it,

it, was extreamly ill, and ſometimes ſpeechleſs; but being recovered, he told his Father, that a Woman of the Town on the Sunday before, had given him *that Apple*, and that ſhe ſtroked him on the ſide, as above. He ſaid he knew not her Name, but *ſhould* her perſon, if he ſaw her. Vpon this *Jones* was adviſed to invite the Women of *Shepton* to come to his houſe, upon the occaſion of his Son's illneſs; and the Child told him, that in caſe the Woman ſhould come in, when he was in his Fit, if he were not able to ſpeak, he would give him an intimation by a Jogg, and deſired that his Father would then lead him through the Room; for he ſaid he would put his hand upon her, if ſhe were there. After this he continuing very ill, many Women came daily to ſee him: And *Jane Brooks* the Sunday after, came in with two of her Siſters, when ſeveral other Women of the Neighbourhood were there.

Upon her coming in, the *Boy* was taken ſo *ill*, that for ſome time he could not *ſee*, nor *ſpeak*; but having recovered his *ſight*, he gave his Father that *Item*, and *he* lead him about the Room. The *Boy* drew towards

wards *Jane Brooks*, who was behinde her two Sisters, among the other Women, and put his hand upon her; which his Father perceiving, immediately *scratcheth* her her *Face*, and drew blood from her. The Youth then presently cryed out that he was *well*, and so he continued 7. or 8. dayes. But then meeting with *Alice Coward*, sister to *Jane Brooks*, who passing by, said to him [*How do you my Honey?*] he presently fell ill again. And after *that*, the said *Coward*, and *Brooks* often appeared to him: The *Boy* would describe the *Cloathes* and *Habit* they were in at the time, exactly, as the Constable, and others, have found upon repairing to them; though *Brooks*'s house was at a good distance from *Jones*'s. This they often tryed, and alwayes found the Boy *right* in his *Descriptions*.

On a certain Sunday about Noon, the *Childe* being in a Room with his *Father*, and one *Gibson*, and in his *Fit*, He on the sudden called out, that he saw *Jane Brooks* on the *Wall*, and *pointed* to the place, where immediately *Gibson struck* with a *Knife*; upon which the Boy cryed out, [*O Father, Coz.* Gibson *hath cut* Jane Brooks

Brooks's *hand, and 'tis Bloody.*] The Father, and *Gibſon* immediately repaired to the Conſtable, a diſcreet perſon, and acquainting him with what had paſt, deſired him to go with them to *Jane Brooks* Houſe, which he did. They found her ſitting in her Room on a ſtool with one hand over the other. The Conſtable ask'd her how ſhe did? ſhe anſwered, *not well.* He ask'd again, why ſhe ſate with one hand over the other? ſhe replyed, *She was wont to do ſo.* He enquired if any thing were amiſs with her hand? her anſwer was, *It was well enough.* The Conſtable deſired he might ſee the hand that was under; which ſhe being unwilling to ſhew him, he drew it out, and found it *bloody*, according to what the *Boy* had ſaid. Being ask't how it came ſo, ſhe ſaid, *'Twas ſcratched with a great Pin.*

On the 8. of *December*, 1657. the *Boy*, *Jane Brooks*, and *Alice Coward*, appeared at *Caſtle Cary*, before the *Juſtices*, Mr. *Hunt*, and Mr. *Cary*. The *Boy* having begun to give his *Teſtimony* upon the coming in of the two Women, and their *looking* on him, was inſtantly taken *ſpeechleſs*, and ſo remained till the Women

were removed out of the Room, and then in a ſhort time, upon examination, he gave a full relation of the mentioned particulars.

On the 11. of *January* following, the *Boy* was again examined by the ſame *Juſtices* at *Shepton Mallet*, and upon the ſight of *Jane Brooks* was again taken *ſpeechleſs*, but was *not ſo* afterwards, when *Alice Coward* came into the room to him.

On the next appearance at *Shepton*, which was on the 17. of *February*, there were preſent many *Gentlemen*, *Miniſters*, and others: The *Boy* fell into his *Fit* upon the ſight of *Jane Brooks*, and lay in a man's Arms like a *dead* perſon: the *Woman* was then willed to lay her hand on him, which ſhe *did*, and he thereupon *ſtarted*, and *ſprang* out in a very ſtrange and unuſual manner. One of the Juſtices to prevent all poſſibilities of *Legerdemain*, cauſed *Gibſon*, and the reſt to ſtand *off* from the *Boy*, and then *that Juſtice* himſelf held him The youth being blindefolded, the Juſtice call'd as if *Brooks* ſhould touch him, but winked to others to do it, which two or three ſucceſſively did; but the *Boy* appeared not concern'd.

The

The *Juſtice* then call'd on the *Father* to take him, but had privately before deſired one Mr. *Geoffery Strode* to bring *Jane Brooks* to touch him, at ſuch time, as he ſhould call for his Father; which was done, and the *Boy* immediately *ſprang* out after a very odde and violent faſhion. He was after touched by ſeveral perſons, and moved not; but *Jane Brooks* being again cauſed to put her hand upon him, he *ſtarted* and ſprang out twice or thrice, as before. All this while he remained in his *Fit*, and ſome time after; and being then laid, on a Bed in the ſame Room, the people preſent could not for a long time *bow* either of his *Arms*, or *Legs*.

Between the mentioned 15. of *Nov.* and the 11. of *Jan.* the two *Women* appeared often to the *Boy*, their *Hands cold*, their *Eyes ſtaring*, and their *Lips*, and *Cheeks looking pale*. In this manner on a *Thurſday* about noon, the *Boy* being newly laid into his Bed, *Jane Brooks*, and *Alice Coward appeared* to him, and told him, that what they had begun, they could not perform. But if he would ſay no more of it, they would give him *money*, and ſo put a *two-pence* into his Pocket. Af-

ter which they took him out of his Bed, laid him on the ground, and vaniſhed; and the Boy was found by thoſe that came next into the Room lying on the floor, as if he had been *dead*. The two-pence was ſeen by many, and when it was put into the *Fire*, and *hot*, the Boy would fall ill; but as ſoon as it was taken out, and cold, he would be again as well as before. This was ſeen and obſerved by a Miniſter, a diſcreet perſon, when the Boy was in one Room, and the *two-pence* (without his knowledge) put into the Fire in another: and this was divers times tryed in the preſence of ſeveral perſons.

Between the 8. of *Decemb.* and the 17. of *Feb.* in the year mention'd, divers perſons at ſundry times heard in the Boy a noiſe like the *croaking* of a *Toad*, and a voice within him, ſaying, *Jane Brooks*, *Alice Coward*, twelve times in near a quarter of an hour. At the ſame time ſome held a Candle before the Boyes face, and earneſtly looked on him, but could not perceive the leaſt motion of his Tongue, Teeth, or Lips, while the voice was heard.

On the 25. of *Feb.* between two and three

three in the afternoon, the Boy being at the Houſe of *Richard Iſles* in *Shepton Mallet*, went out of the Room into the Garden; *Iſles* his Wife followed him, and was within two yards when ſhe ſaw him riſe up from the ground before her, and ſo mounted higher and higher, till he paſſed in the Air over the Garden Wall, and was carried ſo above ground more then 300, yards, falling at laſt at one *Jordan*'s door at *Shepton*, where he was found as dead for a time. But coming to himſelf, told *Jordan* that *Jane Brooks* had taken him up by the Arme out of *Iſles* his Garden, and carried him in the Air, as is related.

The Boy at ſeveral other times was gone on the ſuddain, and upon ſearch after him, found in another room as dead; and at ſometimes *ſtrangely hanging* above ground, his hands being flat againſt a great Beam in the top of the room, and all his body two or three foot from ground. There he hath hung a quarter of an hour together; and being afterwards come to himſelf, he told thoſe that found him, that *Jane Brooks* had carried him to that place, and held him there. Nine

people at a time saw the Boy so strangely hanging by the Beam.

From the 15. of *Nov.* to the 10. of *March* following, he was by reason of his *Fits* much wasted in his body, and unspirited; but after that time, being the day the two Women were sent to Goal, he had no more of those Fits.

Jane Brooks was *condemned*, and *executed* at *Charde Assises*, *March* 26. 1658.

THIS, MY LORD, is the sum of Mr. *Hunts* NARRATIVE, which concludes with both the Justices attestation, thus,

The aforesaid passages were some of them seen by us, and the rest, and some other remarkable ones not here set down, were, upon the examination of several credible witnesses, taken upon Oath before us. Subscribed, *Rob. Hunt. John Cary.*

THIS, I think, my Lord, is good evidence of the being of *Witches*; and if the *Sadduce* be not satisfied with it, I would fain know, what kinde of *proof* he would expect? Here are the *testimony* of *sence*, the *Oaths* of several *credible Attestors*, the *nice* and *deliberate scruteny* of *quick-sighted* and *judicious Examiners*, and

and the *judgment* of an *Aſſize* upon the whole. And now the *ſecurity* of all our *Lives* and *Fortunes* depends upon no greater circumſtances of evidence then *theſe*. If ſuch proof may not be credited, no *Fact* can be proved, no *wickedneſs* can be *puniſh'd*, no *right* can be *determined*, *Law* is at an end, and *blinde Juſtice* cannot tell where to *ſtrike*. *All men are lyars*, and the *Long Sword* muſt ſettle *properties*, and reſolve all doubts of *Truth*, and *Claim*. Theſe large morſels, my Lord, he that denies ſuch *evidences* of *fact* muſt ſwallow, and then let him tell me by what *title* he holds any thing he poſſeſſeth? How proves he his Relation, and conſequently Succeſſion to the rights of his *preſumed progenitors*? and 'tis no great matter whether he can or no, ſince when that is done, how will it appear, that his *Bonds*, *Entails*, and *Leaſes* are not *Forgeries*, and *tricks* of *Couſenage*? And how will he clear his own *Bargains* and *Tranſactions* of buſineſs from being *Dreams* and *Illuſions*? Certainly, he that runs upon all theſe *Rocks*, and layes the train of ſo many *dangerous abſurdities*, hath ſome mighty winde that drives him, and ſome huge neceſſity

for his concluſion, and nothing elſe can juſtifie his aſſertion, *That thoſe things of Witches are not true*; but this other, *That they are impoſſible*; and when he hath done *that*, I'le uſe his arguments to prove all the world is a great *inchanted Houſe*, and *Nature* a *grand Impoſture*, *viz.* that *really* there are no ſuch things as are repreſented to our *gull'd* and *abuſed ſences*, but that all are meer *preſtigious ſhews*, *and phantaſtical Idæas*. I ſay, my Lord, I'le prove *this* by the ſame method of arguing that concludes againſt the *poſsibility* of the actions of *Witchcraft*, which I know can proceed but to this inference, *That the mode of thoſe performances is not perceived*; from whence, if it be juſt to infer, *that the things are not*; I'le ſet up for a *Sceptick*, and uſe the argument againſt all the *objects* of my *ſences*; which I have elſewhere ſaid, and proved to be really as *unconceiveable* and *unaccountable* as the *obſtruſeſt* matters of *Magick* and *Faſcinations*.

But, my Lord, my Pen runs out to your Lordſhips trouble; I recal it, and muſt permit it to adde no more, but that I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhips moſt obliged Humble Servant,

J. G.

A LETTER

To the Reverend and Learned

Dr. HENRY MORE,

About the

Drummer

OF

TEDWORTH.

Honoured Sir,

THe ſcrupulous care you take in examining the *Story* of the *Diſturbance* at *TEDWORTH*, is no more then becomes a *Philoſopher*, and one that is not willing to be deceived. And without ſuch a *cautious*, and *particular* enquiry, you could not anſwer the *murmures*, and *petty* evaſions of wilful Unbelievers. Thoſe *objections* you pickt up at *Cambridge*, have the ill fortune to miſcarry in almoſt every circumſtance; and are in no like-

likelihood of being believed, but at a great distance. Some of them, I could have answered upon mine own knowledge; and concerning the rest, I have made a strict inquiry of Mr. *Mompesson* himself, and others, when I was last in those parts; and upon certain information, I give you this account.

To the (1.) that saith, *The House is rented, and that this is a device to beat down the value of it.* I answer from *his* mouth, That the *House is his own*; and so the foundation of this shift is overturned. The *second* of those that say, *It is a trick to get money from those that come to see the Prodigy*, hath as little *truth*, but much more *malice* in the first contrivers than the former. For this Gentleman being a person of Estate, I'me confident scorns so *base*, and so *beggerly* a policy; and is so far from making any advantage by the *Disturbance*, that *it* hath done him very material prejudice in his *Fortunes*, and *Affairs*. And those strangers that come to see the *Prodigy*, use to leave nothing behinde them, except thanks for the *Civility* of their *Entertainments*. 'Tis true (3.) as others say, that *the House is boarded with-*

out,

out, at leaſt a great part of it: But there are no Cellars (as the objection adds) ſave only under the *Parlour*; and the *Diſturbance* was moſt in other rooms. And whereas (4) 'tis objected, that *a Knight that offer'd to go down, could not be permitted.* 'Tis anſwer'd me, that the Gentleman might have gone down, had he pleas'd; and his Servant did, who made a careful ſearch, but could finde nothing that might be a cauſe of the noiſe, which he affirmed to be above; and that it proceeded not from the *Cellar*. And to diſable what other *Objectors* ſay, *viz.* (5) *That there was no Drumming in the midſt of any Room, but only a ſtriking on the Boards as it were with a Hammer, in a corner of the outſides of the Houſe*: I ſay, to null this *pretence*, Mr. *Mompeſſon* and others aſſured me, that the noiſe was oft in the *midſt* of the *Room*, and oft overhead; and he ſaith that there is ſcarce a *Man*, or *Childe*, in the Village, but hath heard, and can witneſs it. And after the firſt moneth it was almoſt alwayes within. Thus Sir, to the *Objections* of others which you have gather'd. And to your *own Quæries* I make this return.

Where-

Whereas you inquire (1.) *What part of the Childrens Bed did the Dæmon beat, and what noiſe did it make?* 'Tis anſwered, that it beat againſt the Head and Poſts of the Bed, and that when hands were laid on each ſide of them, at thoſe times they would ſhake as if they would fall in pieces; but nothing elſe could be perceived, or felt. The noiſe was like to that of ſtriking with a Hammer. And then (2.) To *that*, whether the *Drummers Drum was ever looked on while it beat; or was it only in the Dark?* I am aſſured, that *it* was *ſeen* while the noiſe was made upon it, both by the light of *Fire* and *Candle*. (3) To the *Quæry, What were the Boards that moved, by what light was their motion ſeen, and by whom?* Mr. *Mompeſſon anſwers*, They were ſeen move *forwards*, and *backwards* in the light of clear day, before the Sun was ſet, and by a whole houſe full of people. And whereas (4.) you ask, *In what clearneſs of light were the Chairs ſeen walk about, and by what Witneſſes?* 'Tis anſwered, That they were ſeen to do ſo by Candle-light, and by divers perſons.

As to what I was a witneſs of my ſelf, I adde theſe circumſtances for the ſatisfaction

ction of your Quæries. The *Children* were in *Bed*, when the *Scratching* and *panting* was; but I am *sure* did not contribute to those noises. I saw their hands above the Cloathes, during the *Scraping*, and searched the place whence the noise came: To which I might adde, That they were little, harmless, modest Girles, that could not well have been suspected guilty of the confidence of such a juggle, had it been possible they could have acted in it. For the *panting*, I am certain there was no *dog* in the Bed; for I grasp't it with my hand, and felt it in all parts, especially there where the original motion was. The *Bed* also was *searcht under*, but no *Dog*, nor any creature else could be found there. The *Floor* I said *shook* with the *panting sensibly*, and yet it was as strong and substantial an one, as ordinarily is seen. But the *Children* indeed did not seem to be much *concern'd*, having been us'd to *those*, and *ruder noises*, and there was company in the room to assure them.

THUS, Sir, I have briefly answer'd others OBJECTIONS, and your QUÆRIES. And because I have an humour

mour to say little more, I'le consider (what you know as well as any man alive) the *Reasons* men are so apt to cavil at this kinde of *Relations*, and are rather willing to believe any thing than the truth of such a *Narrative*. They are chiefly, I think, an *affected humour* of *Drollery*, and *Scoffing*, and a *worse* cause, *ATHEISM*.

FOR the *First*, the Subject of *Witches*, and *Apparitions* is an apt, and ample occasion. And the *cheats* of *Impostors*, the *conceits of Melancholly*, the *credulity* of *ignorance*, the *tricks* of *Waggery*, the more *solemn vanities* of *Superstition*, and the *tales* of *old Women*; these are excellent *topicks* for a *frolick* and *wanton fancy*. And the desire the *Humourist* hath to be some body, and to have a *name* above those of common apprehension, will be sure to actuate the *scoffing vein*; in the exercise of which, if he have *quibled luckily*, and made folks *laugh*, he is encouraged to take all such occasions to prove himself a *WIT*, and to shew he had a pretty way to *play* the *Fool*. And when he hath *wanton'd* a while, and frolickly toy'd in his *affected merriments*, his *reason* becomes an obedient servant to his *fancy*. He makes him-

himſelf *believe*, by thoſe *arguments*, that at firſt were intended only to make him *laugh*, and in the end, concludes in *earneſt*, that there is neither *Witch*, nor *Apparition*: and 'tis well if he ſtop there. Now theſe, Sir, are the WITS (if we will believe them) and their admirers take every *jeſt* for an *argument*, and a *loud laugh* upon an idle tale of a *Devil*, or a *Witch*, for a *demonſtration* of the *non-exiſtence* of ſuch beings. And thus the *humour* propagates, and SADDUCISM is the *Faſhion*. Nor is this all, but by the ſame method every thing that is *ſacred*, or *ſerious* hath been expoſed, and both *Government*, and *Religion* made the objects of idle, and phantaſtick *buffoonry*. And muſt we call this WIT Sir? I confeſs there are few things that urge me to more *indignation*, than to hear that name which deſerves to ſignifie *better*, to be ſo *injuriouſly* apply'd. Certainly WIT is not an *odde metaphor*, or a *lucky ſimile*, a *wilde fetch*, or *unexpected inference*, a *mimick* action, or a *pretty knack* in *telling* of a *tale*. But *It* is a *faculty* to profound into the *depth* of things, to finde out their *Cauſes*, and *Relatives*, *Conſonances*, and *Diſ-*

agree-

agreements, and to make *fit*, *uſeful*, and *unobvious applications* of their reſpective *Relations* and *Dependances*; for which great, and noble exerciſes of the minde, the *Droll* is the moſt unfit and incompetent perſon in the World; and thoſe that on this account aſſume the prerogative of being the only WITS, are of all men the moſt incapable of being ſo. For that *trivial*, and *pedling* way of *Fancy*, and *Humour*, to which they are addicted, *emaſculates* their *mindes*, and makes them *ſuperficial*, *flaſhy*, and *phantaſtical*, by imploying them upon *effæmancies*, and little *apiſh fooleries*. And by theſe *darling entertainments* of a too *fondly indulged* fancy, the minde is made incapable of *ſerious* and *deep reflections*, which give it the *nobleſt*, and moſt *valuable improvements*: ſo that I have obſerv'd, that the *Drolling Humoriſts* are for the moſt part, *remarkably defective*, in *cloſe ratiocinations*, and the *worſt* in the world at *inference*; which is no wonder, ſince fancy is a *deſultory*, and *roving faculty*; and when 'tis not under the *conduct* of a *ſevere judgment*, not able to keep it ſelf to a *ſteady*, and *reſolved attention*; much leſs, to make *coherent*

herent chains of *rational Deduction.* So that 'tis next to impoſſible for ſuch *Wits* as *theſe*, to arrive to more than a *knack* of *ſcoffing* at what they *underſtand not.* And they are under almoſt an *invincible* temptation of doing ſo, by every thing that is too *great* for their *comprehenſion*; for the humour that acts them is *proud*, and *aſſuming*, and would not have any thing to be valu'd, of which it ſelf is *incapable*; and therefore it *depreciates* all the *nobler* and more *generous* matters which *It* hath very great reaſon to deſpair of; and endeavours by a *ridiculous* and *inſolent ſcorn*, to lift it ſelf above them. And yet this *preſumed wit* which raiſeth them to ſuch an *elevation* in their own *conceit*, is but a *young* and *boyiſh humour*; and the very *firſt eſſayes* of *Juvenile Inventions* are in theſe *exerciſes* of *Fancy*, which the *maturer ſpirit* out-grows. For you know, Sir, our *ſences* are the firſt powers we *exerciſe*, and *indulge* in our *greeneſt years*: From *them*, by degrees our *imaginations grow* up, and *their* actions, and gratifications are the pleaſures. and entertainments of *youth*; which is eaſie to obſerve in the little *flirts*, *quibbles*, and *tricks* of *Fancy*,

with which the *younger Students* in the *Universities* are so much *tickled*, and *transported*. But when *age* and *experience ripens* the *Judgment* (which is the faculty of slowest growth) we then slight this *wantonness*, and *toying* of our *Fancies*, and apply our selves to pursuites that are more *manly*, and *concerning*. And when the *Judgment* is come to its full *exercise*, and *pitch*, and hath overcome, and *silenc'd* the *futilities* and *prejudices* of *imagination*; we are *then*, and not *till then*, grown into *manhood*. And those that never arrive to *this consistence*, but spend their age in *fooling* with their *Fancies*, They are yet *children*, though they have *gray hairs*, and are still *boyes*, though past their *great climacterical*.

I confess, Sir, I am not so *cynical*, and *severe*, but that I allow even to the more *improved genuises* their *relaxations* and pleasant Intervals, And *sage Socrates* himself sometimes rid the *Boyes Hobby-Horse*. *Fancy* may be permitted its *plaisance*, and *in-offensive raileries*, so long as they are governed by the rules of *vertue*, and a *prudent Judgment*. And no doubt *God* himself allows all our *powers*, and *faculties* their

their *innocent gratifications*, yea, and I acknowledge a *delightful prettineſs* in the *reſults* of a *managed* and *judicious fancy*, while it is employed in expoſing *vice*, and *conceited follies*, to deſerved *ſcorn*, and *laughter*. But when *Imagination* is *rampant*, *looſe*, and *ungoverned*, when it knows *no bounds*, and obſerves no *Decorums*, but *ſhoots* at *Randome*, and inſolently flies at all things that are *auguſt*, and *venerable*; its *ſallies* are then *vitious*, and *deteſtable exceſſes*; and thoſe that are of *this humour*, are but a ſort of *fleering Buffoons*, that is, a better kinde of *Apes*, in the judgment of the *Wiſe*, though *Wits* in their own,

But Sir, I intimated a greater charge againſt theſe *quibbling debauches*, (viz.) that they are the enemies of GOVERNMENT and RELIGION, and ſhall prove *it*, with this addition, that they are ſo of all the *better ſorts of KNOWLEDGE*.

For GOVERNMENT you know Sir, its *influence* depends much upon the *reverence* its Rulers have from the people; and while *They* are *men*, there will be miſcarriages in *publick affairs*, and *manage-*

ments of *State*; And if all the *ſlips*, and *imperfections*, all the *miſtakes* and *faults* of the *ſupreme Miniſters* of *Rule*, be tattled and aggrevated among the *heard*, The *Government* will thereby be expoſed to the *ſcorns* of the *Rabble*, and loſe a great part of its *force* with its *reverence*. And in *this* it ſuffers infinitely from the *drolling phantaſticks*, who blow in the *ſores*, till they have *rankled* them, with their *malicious*, and *poyſonous breath*, and *ſhoot Libels* at the *Government* till they have made *deep wounds* in its *reputation*, and *Reverence*, and turned every *tongue* into a *weapon* of *War* againſt it. Thus do theſe *Chams* diſcover their *Fathers* nakedneſs, and rejoyce to publiſh the *ſhame* of thoſe, whoſe failures and infirmities, *Loyalty*, *Prudence*, and regard to the *publick quiet*, ſhould oblige them to *conceal*.

Nor (2.) is *RELIGION* more beholden to them. For a minde that uſeth to *whiffle* up and down in the *Levities* of *Fancy*, will finde a very great indiſpoſition to the *ſerious* and *ſolemn* exerciſes of *Piety*, and *that* will grow into an *averſation*, which will be ſure to prompt the *humouriſt* to take all occaſions to expoſe *it*: ſo that

that he quickly *jeſts* at *Scripture*, and makes a *mock* of *ſin*, *playes* with *eternal flames*, and *ſcoffs* at thoſe that *fear* them. As if the *ſacred Oracles* were but a *Legend* of *idle Tales*; and *ſin* but a *name* coin'd by *Fancy*, and vain *fears*; as if *Hell* were but *a painted fire*, and the *Religious* a ſort of *timerous Fools*, that are afraid of *Buggs*, and the *Imagery* of *Dreams*: and if theſe are not yet the *real Articles* of their *Creed*, their *extravagant Fancies*, and *vile affections* are like in a ſhort time to encline theſe *light*, and *impure* ſpirits, to make them ſo.

And this ſort of *Wits* are either *Atheiſts*, or as great *prodigies* of *Folly*, if they *are not*; ſince to believe a *God* that *made*, *ſees*, and will *judge* them; and to ſcoff at that *Tremendous Majeſty* before whom their *Brother-WITS below tremble*, to *think* the *Scriptures* are the *Inſpirations* of the *God* of *Heaven*, the *Laws* of *Souls*, and grand *Inſtruments* of *Immortal* happineſs, and yet to *droll* upon them, and to jeſt with the *records* of *eternity*, to *believe* endleſs *Torments*, and everlaſting *Joyes* in the ſtate immediately ſucceeding theſe our ſhort and uncertain beings, and yet to *ſport* with the *wrath* of *God*, and to make *tricks* at *eternal*

terrors; to talk *trivially* of *beatifical enjoyments*, and to make as bold with *Heaven*, as they do with an *imaginary Elisium*: *These*, I say, are *follies*, *these* are degrees of *impudence* beyond all *aggravation*, or *possibilities* of *expression*; and did not sad experience shew *them*, one would scarce believe there were such *prodigious Monsters* in nature. And to these things I adde.

(3.) These idle *Drollists* have an utter *antipathy* to all the *braver* and more *generous* kindes of *KNOWLEDGE*. For that they are perfectly indisposed for *Philosophy*, and all *deep researches*, I have said some things that may suffice for proof already. And I adde this observation to confirm it, That among the numerous Youth I have seen bred in a *Great School*, and in the *University*, I have noted, that those of them who were most remarkable for *waggishness* and *jesting*, seldom arrived to any great *maturities*, or *capacity* for things of *consequence*, and *weight*, And indeed *frolickness* of *Fancy*, and *solidity* of *Judgment*, require *dispositions* of *brain* that are very *different*, and *such* as seldom meet in great degrees, but in some very few, extraordinary tempers. But *generally* I believe

lieve the *Droll* is very unfit for matters of *ſublimity* and *ſubſtance*: and therefore (as I intimated) indeavours by his *ſcoffs* and *injuries*, to make them appear as much *below* his *ſerious notice*, as they are *indeed above* his *reach*: and in this deſign he hath many great advantages for his abuſes, For the *pedantry* of *Diſputers* that make a loud claim to *knowledge*, the *vanity* of the *extravagant* ſort of *Chymiſts*, the *fond boaſts* of ſome *bold* pretenders to *Philoſophy*, and *experiment*; the *ſtrangeneſs* of things that *ſoberer Inquiſitors* declare *practicable*, but have not yet *ſucceeded*, the *meanneſs* and ſeeming *contemptibleneſs* of many Subjects, the *experimenter* is often obliged to deal in: *Theſe* afford *plauſible* arguments for *Drolling Harangues*, and thoſe advantages are taken to make the moſt *uſeful Theories*, and *endeavours* appear *ridiculous* and *vain*. And for the incouragement of the *phantaſtick*, in his *inſolent* humour of *injuſtice*, and *abuſe*, there is a certain *envy* in mankinde againſt thoſe that attempt any thing *extraordinary*, which makes men willing to embrace and applaud *that* which expoſeth what themſelves cannot *act*, nor *comprehend*; by

reaſon of which *ill nature* in the generality, yea, even of thoſe that pretend to ſomething: This kinde of *Wit* becomes the moſt *peſtilent* enemy to *knowledge*, and its improvements, eſpecially to *philoſophick wiſdom*. For *Philoſophy* can ſhame, and diſable all the *reaſons* that can be urged againſt it; but *jeſts*, and *loud laughter* are not to be *confuted*: and yet *theſe* are of more force to degrade a thing in the eſteem of ſome ſort of Spirits, than the moſt *potent demonſtrations*: and the miſchief of it is, that theſe *Quibblers* and *Buffoons* that have ſome *little* ſcraps of *Learning* matcht with a *great* proportion of *Confidence*, have commonly the luck to be celebrated among the vulgar for men of great *parts* and *knowledge*; and that opinion of them gains credit to their *inſolencies*, and *abuſes*.

But, Sir, I perceive my zeal againſt thoſe pedlars of Wit hath tranſported me to your trouble, I therefore make an abrupt return to my other reaſon mention'd, of mens diſbelief of the being of *Witches*, and *Apparitions*, and that is,

(2.) *ATHEISM*; the *Folly* of which *accurſed madneſs*, you, Sir, have ſo fully diſcovered to the world, in your incompa-

rable

rable Works, and ſo throughly underſtand the *myſteries* of that *black* conſpiracy againſt heaven, that 'twould be fond for me to think to ſuggeſt any notion on the Subject, which you could not teach. But Sir, I have a *Relation* about this matter to make you, which I believe you will not be unwilling to hear. And you ſhall have it when I have ſaid ſomething to the purpoſe of the particular I have mention'd. Concerning which, 'tis too ſadly certain that there is a *latent Atheiſm* at the root of the SADDUCEAN principle: for too many deny *Witches*, becauſe they believe there are no *Spirits*; and they are ſo perſwaded becauſe they own no being in the world, but *matter*, and the *reſults* of *motion*, and conſequently, can acknowledge *nothing* of a *God*.

It *hath* indeed been a *queſtion*, whether 'tis poſſible there ſhould be ſuch a *prodigy* as a *ſpeculative Atheiſt* in nature; and I could wiſh it were ſo ſtill: But alas, our Age and Experience hath ended the *Diſpute*; and we need not ſearch the *dark*, and *barbarous corners* of *America*, nor ſeek the *Monſter* among the *wilde Men* of the *Deſart*; we have found him in Times of *Light*,

Light, in a *witty* and *civiliz'd* Region, and in an *Age* of the greateſt *knowledge* and *improvements*: he *ſculps* not among the thickeſt of the *Woods*, nor ſeeks *Caverns* for *concealment*, but *braves* the *Sun*, and appears in the *cleareſt day*. And the *Fool* is not ſo *modeſt* as he was in the dayes of the *Royal Prophet*, to ſay only in his *heart*, *There is no God*: we know a bolder ſort of *Infidels*, and I can ſay, Sir, from a *particular* experience, That there are, who deny the *exiſtence* of a *Deity*. I met with one ſuch ſome years ſince in *London*, who confidently, and without mincing, denyed that there was any ſuch being, and bid me prove it. I wondered at the *boldneſs*, as well as the *impiety* of his *ſaying*; and becauſe I had a great *compaſſion* for one in ſo deplorable a ſtate, I reſolved not to exaſperate him by *paſſion*, *hard words*, or *damning Sentences*, but *calmly*, and without ſeeming *emotion*, diſcourſed the buſineſs with him - I granted him all I *ſafely* or *reaſonably* could, and all that might ſerve my deſign for his *conviction*, before we began the cloſe ingagement, that ſo he might have leſs prejudice againſt what was ſaid by one whom he might ſee

not

not to be of a *narrow*, *confined* judgment; and that I might not have the diſadvantage of being put upon the impugning of *principles* which are *plauſible* by the great names, or reaſons of any eminent Philoſophers, and that were not abſolutely neceſſary for the *defence* of the *Propoſition*, for which I undertook, ſuch were the *Platonick Anima Mundi*, the *eternity*, and *immenſity* of the world; which Sir, though I ſhould not *affirm*, yet I would not at that time *deny*, but quietly granted them as *Hypotheſeis*; being willing to permit his belief of *theſe*, in order to the convincing and abuſing him in his *main*, and *deadly concluſion*. And by *theſe conceßions* I gain'd the *advantages* I expected; for hereby he was diſappointed of all thoſe *plauſibilities*, which I perceived he was wont to urge for thoſe Doctrines. And I ſaw, that when he was preſt with the neceſſity of a *cauſe* of all things, and a *Firſt*, his refuge was that old *Epicurean* one, of an *eternal*, *infinite matter*; which when his *unwary oppoſites* would attempt to diſprove by endeavouring to demonſtrate the *beginning*, and *Finiteneſs* of the world, They gave him the opportunity of a colourable

lourable *Defence*, and diverted from the main *Theſis*, which might be evinced though the *Immenſity* and *Eternity* of the *univerſe* were granted. And ſo they let him go from an *aſſertion* that is moſt *impious*, and *abſurd*, to *another* which is tollerably *accountable*, and *ſpecious*, And the *Concluſion* would be at laſt, that ſince the undertaker could not prove the world was not *infinite* and *eternal*, he could not make it appear, *There was a God.* By which procedure the arguer falls from a *Propoſition* which is the moſt *demonſtrative* one in nature, to *an other*, which cannot be cleared but by *ſuppoſing* the main thing in Queſtion.

But beſides *this ſhift* which my conceſſion made inſignificant, when my *Atheiſt* was urged with the *Order*, *Harmony*, *Contrivance*, and *Wiſdom* that is viſible in the Creatures, he would betake him to his *Anima Mundi*; the *exiſtence* of which, when thoſe other Antagoniſts he had dealt with would endeavour to overthrow, they undertook a thing of *harder profuſion*, than the main *concluſion*.

I ſay therefore, Sir, I permitted him to aſſume *theſe Principles*, and then proved, That

That though the world *were immenſe.* and *eternal*, yet, That 'tis not poſſible meer *blinde*, *unguided matter* ſhould ſhuffle it ſelf into ſuch *regular*, and *accurate productions*, as we ſee are the reſults of every day, without the *manuduction* of ſome *knowing Agent*, and *Contriver*, as you have fully made good in your excellent ANTIDOTE. And when he at this turn took *ſanctuary* in an *Anima Mundi*, as the cauſe of all the *art*, and *exactneſs* in Nature, I granted him the *being*, but askt him, Whether he took it for a ſubſtance, that was *intelligent*, or devoid of reaſon, and perception? when he ſeemed to incline to this *latter*, I ſhewed him, that ſuch a principle as had no ſence, or knowledge, ſignified no more to his purpoſe, than if he had ſtuck in the *Hypotheſis* of *meer matter*, and *motion*. But when he allow'd his *great Soul* to be an *intellectual Being* (as he at laſt did) and that *it* was *immenſe* and *eternal* (as he was forced to do by his aſſertion, that this *ſoul* was diffuſed through the whole maſs of his *infinite* and *eternal* matter.) I ſhewed him, that in effect he was brought by his own principles to the acknowledgment of a GOD, though he gave him another name. Thus

Thus Sir, I purſued my *Infidel* into all his *ſtarting holes*, and *retreats*, and drive him from one *aſſertion* to another, its *contradictory*, and then back again upon the *firſt Theſis*, and ſo up and down till at length he began to be aſhamed of his *ſhuffling*, and confeſt that I had ſaid to him more then he had heard, and ſome things that he would *conſider*. He deſired that I would give him the ſubſtance of my diſcourſe in writing, which I prepared for him, and ſhall perhaps e're long give an account of theſe, and other dependent matters to the publick.

After the heat of our ingagement was over, I was willing to learn by what means he came into that *deſperate Infidelity*, and underſtood from him, that he had run through the ſeveral ſtages of *modern Sects*, not ſtopping till he came down to that *ſink* of *Folly*, and *madneſs*, *Quakeriſm*, and thence made a ſtep into *Atheiſm*; which is no great leap; for *Eaſt* and *Weſt* at long run *meet*, and are the ſame. And certainly he that places his *Religion* in *opinions*, and judgeth *it* now to lie in *this form* of *belief*, and *then* in *another*; when he comes to *conſider* the *vaſt variety* of *Sects*, the

the *confidence* of each in his *own reasonings*, the *pretences* of all to *Scripture*, *Reason*, and *Antiquity*; the *antipathy* they have one againſt another, and the *doubtfulneſs*, if not *falſhood*, of things, that each of them hold *ſacred*, and *certain*: I ſay, he that takes *Religion* to be an *adherence* to *Sects* and *Opinions*, is upon the accounts mention'd, when he reflects, in mighty danger of being an *Atheiſt*. And except he fix at laſt upon the *few*, *plain*, *acknowledg'd eſſentials* of *belief*, and *good life* (if he be of an *anxious*, *inquiſitive mind*, and not *obſtinately* reſolv'd in the way of his *particular Sect.*) 'Tis a *miracle* if he ends not *there* at laſt, for he having eſtabliſht *this*, That Religion conſiſts in the *way*, or *form* of ſome party, or other; and then having ſucceſſively deſerted thoſe Sects that had moſt of his favour and affection; and ſo paſt from one to another, through all the ſteps of deſcent, when at length he is fallen out with the *laſt*, he hath nothing elſe to fly to but *contempt* of all *Religion*, as a meer *juggle* and *Impoſture*. This I took to be this Gentleman's caſe; and I believe much of the *general Atheiſm* of our dayes is to be aſcribed to this Cauſe. Thus

Thus, Sir, I have followed the humour of writing, as it lead me, and expect your pardon of this ramble, upon the account of that liberty which vses to be allowed in intercourses of this nature; and more from that Friendship with which you are pleased to honour,

SIR,

Your Affectionate

Humble Servant,

J. G.

FINIS.

Ser no 31
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4° ann. 1666 & 1667.